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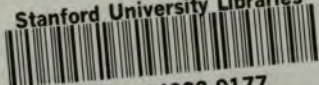
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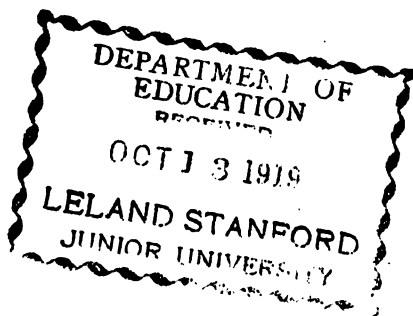
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# ENGLISH COMPOSITION

BY

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## PREFACE

THE present text-book is intended as a guide to pupils in the first two years' work in English in the high school. The creed of its authors may be summed up in a few words: (1) A text-book in composition should be short, simple, clear; (2) it should set forth the principles of writing mainly in non-technical language, i. e., in such language as the pupils will recognize as being in their own sphere of interests and ideas; (3) it should lay stress upon the matter to be dealt with before the form, and upon the results to be obtained rather than the method; (4) it should give abundant suggestions as to material suitable for treatment by the pupils.

In the view of the authors, the book contains material enough for the instruction in composition over a period of two years, where such instruction is given once or twice a week. For no exercise in writing, of any type, is likely to attain its end if given but once. The pupil needs to try the work, to have his efforts judged by the teacher, and then to try again with the help derived from the teacher's criticisms. Even if his first attempt should be fairly successful, he should do more work of the same kind. For writing is an art, and, like all arts, requires frequent and thoughtful practice. With this procedure in view,



the authors have given, in most of the exercises in composition, a number of subjects.

If a direct suggestion to the teacher might be allowed, we should say that the interest of the pupils in writing will depend, not primarily upon the teacher's knowledge of the art of composition, but rather upon his power to arouse interest in things and ideas about which they may write.

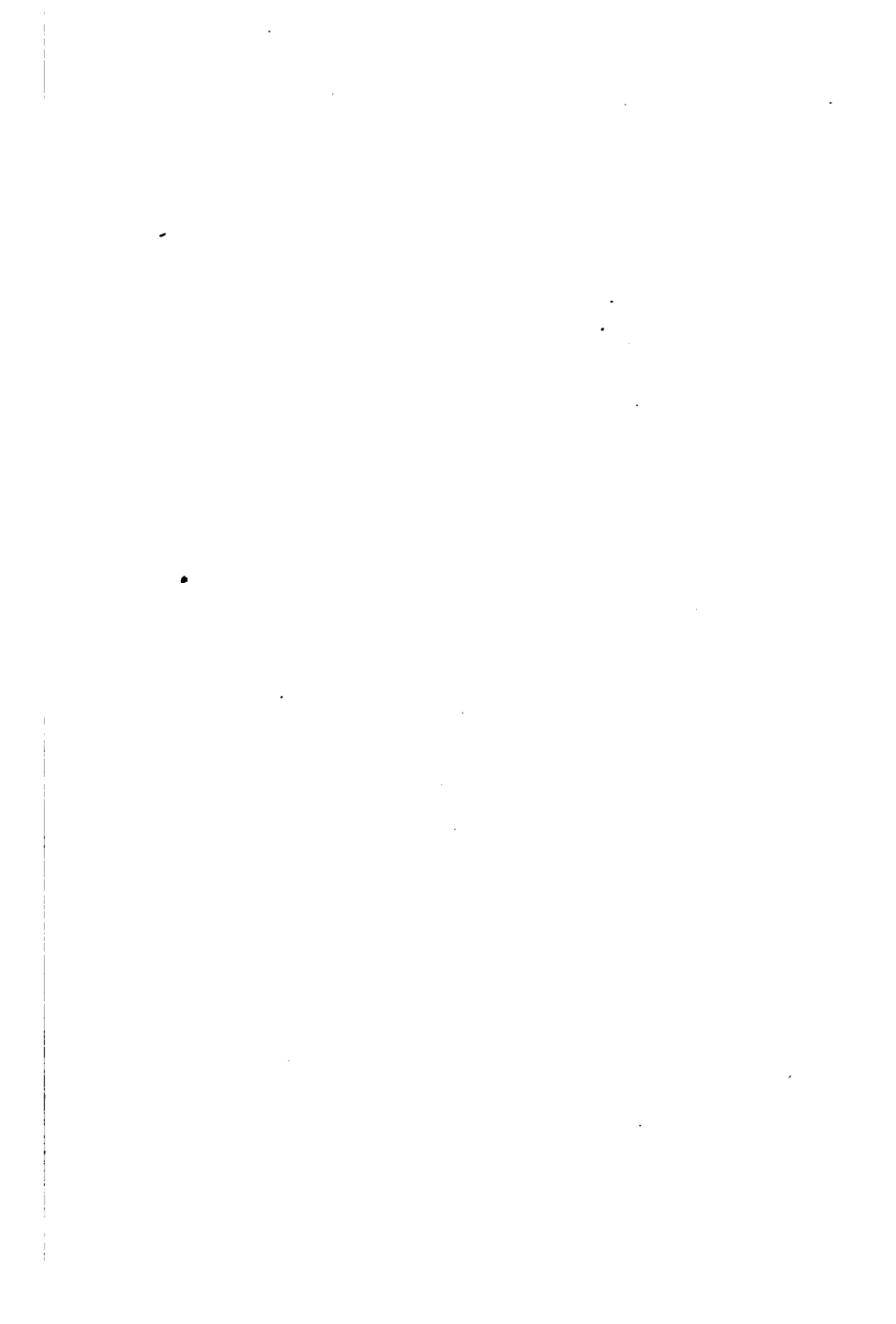
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## INTRODUCTION

WHY should we study English composition? This is a question which a thoughtful pupil would naturally ask, and to which he ought to have a clear and reasonable answer.

In the first place, then, the expression of our thoughts is a matter of great importance to us all. Upon the ability to express what is in our minds depend in great degree our business and our pleasure. Almost all our work, in school or out, requires some talking or writing; and much of our pleasure comes from expressing our ideas or feelings, or from hearing or reading the thoughts and feelings of others. And all such expression of thoughts or feelings, whether written or spoken, is *composition*. When the pupil explains why he came late to school, or how he lost the problems he had worked out, that explanation is a composition, just as truly as his written account of a fishing trip or his written description of a snow-covered landscape handed in to his teacher of English, or a formal letter of application for a business position. Composition is, therefore, an act which we perform every day of our lives. The study of composition is the study of one of the most common and necessary acts found among civilized people. And there is no reason for doubting its value or for neglecting to try to do it as well as we can. That the work is often difficult and sometimes dull, is no argument

against it; so is the work that most people have to do to earn their bread and butter.

The difficulty of the art of composition is, on the other hand, one of the interesting things about it. It is one of those arts which thoughtful people are learning all their lives, and in which no one ever becomes perfect. We begin to learn it in our infancy, when we begin to talk. We are learning it in all our attempts to say or write things in a clear, or convincing, or pleasing way. We are learning it when we try to arrange and express our ideas so as to make other people see and feel things exactly as we feel and see them.

The world is full of things and ideas; there are many ways of seeing and thinking and feeling; there are many ways of expressing what we see and think and feel. But other people often see and think and feel differently from ourselves. So that we need to take careful thought to convey to their minds just exactly what we see and think and feel. To be misunderstood is not pleasant, and is often extremely inconvenient. To be *clear* in our speaking and writing is, therefore, of the greatest importance.

But the art of composition includes more than being clear. We must *interest* and *please* if we would get a hearing. We might say what we have to say in such a manner as could not be misunderstood, and yet find that no one cared to hear us, because what we have to say is not interesting or not agreeably put. Many a person with a clear enough mind is regarded as a bore. We must, therefore, try to see the interesting things in the subjects we discuss, and to speak of

them in an interesting and pleasing way. And to do this, we must consider both our subject and our audience.

In addition to being clear and interesting and agreeable, our speaking or writing must also often have the aim to *convince*. For this purpose we must not only think and speak clearly and agreeably, but must use especially such ideas as shall satisfy the judgment and the feelings of the persons addressed. Much of our success and pleasure in life depends upon our ability to convince.

These, then, are the principal things to learn in our speaking and writing: to express ourselves clearly, interestingly, agreeably, and convincingly. And these are the things we seek to learn in the study of composition. The importance of the study of composition thus appears to depend mainly upon two things: the necessity of using composition in our daily lives, and the need of taking thought in order to practice well this rather difficult art.

To these reasons we must add another. The attempt to make a good composition involves the ability to know and to judge what is good. We all read, for pleasure and instruction; and the study of composition will help us to judge our reading more intelligently and to appreciate better what is good. It is, therefore, another means of adding to our information and our pleasure.

A further explanation of the term composition seems desirable. A composition is more than a single remark. It is, rather, a number of ideas given in succession, and bearing a definite and proper relation to

each other, so that taken together they express what we think and feel regarding a certain subject. For example, if we give an account of a morning walk, of a runaway accident, of a picture, of a plan that we desire to carry out, we are making a composition.

Compositions are commonly divided into four classes, according to the kind of things they contain. If the main purpose is to tell a story, we have Narration; if to describe something, we have Description; if to explain something, Exposition; if to convince by reasoning, Argumentation. But these forms are generally not distinct. Description and narration often appear together. Sometimes a description is given by narrating a succession of happenings, sometimes a narration consists of a succession of scenes: In the same way description or narration may be blended with exposition or argument, and these last two with each other. Though this distinction among these four fundamental forms is convenient for teacher and pupil, it must be remembered that it is often uncertain and arbitrary, and frequently unnecessary.

In a former paragraph some of the essentials of a good composition have been mentioned. These requirements of clearness, interest, and effectiveness are not merely arbitrary matters. They depend upon certain important facts: the nature of the subject treated, the nature of the person addressed, and the usages of language. This means that to write well we must know our subject well, must understand how those for whom we write are likely to receive it, and what are the accepted and forceful ways of saying things.

These last points—that is, the command of language

and the arrangement of ideas, are what we consider most when we study composition. Custom, and the way the human mind works, decide what is right and fitting. We say *I am* instead of *I be*, because *I am* is the form used by educated people. We say *a black horse* instead of *a horse black*, because the English language uses the former order. We describe a scene by giving the general impression first and the details afterwards, because that is the way in which the mind of the reader can most easily grasp the description. We adopt the sentence as a unit of expression, because that is the unit of thought for others: that is, they think in sentences. We divide a composition into paragraphs, because it is thus made easier for the reader to understand the more important divisions of our subject, and so understand us the more easily. We choose one form of expression rather than another, because it is in better taste; that is, because it is used by people who use language with a sense of its fitness for a given purpose. These, and other such matters, are the subjects of study and practice in composition.

Finally, composition is, as we have already called it, an *art*; that is, it is a way of doing things, rather than a matter of mere knowledge. It is to be learned by *doing* it, not by mere reading about it and thinking about it. Thoughtful and frequent practice is the only road to success in composition.

### Exercise.

Choose three subjects about which you know enough to write a short composition. Tell why each of these subjects interests you, and what things in an account of them might interest others. Write on one of these subjects.





# ENGLISH COMPOSITION

## CHAPTER I

### GRAMMAR AND COMPOSITION

#### 1. Grammar.

We may learn to speak and write well without knowing grammar. But very few of us do so; most of us need to know, especially in our writing, how to apply consciously certain rules that belong to the subject of grammar. The present chapter is intended partly as a review of some of these principles of grammar, and partly as an exercise in using those principles in our writing.

#### 2. What grammar is.

The grammar of any language deals with the forms of words and with the relations of words and groups of words to each other in that language. English grammar presents those matters of form and relationship which belong to the English language. Its business is mainly to record what is established as correct usage, though it may call attention to certain wrong usages that exist. What *ought to be* right or wrong, it is not the business of grammar to say; grammar can only tell us what *is* right or wrong.

### 3. Historical grammar.

A special form of grammar that has come to be of great interest is *historical grammar*. In it we trace the origins of certain usages that now prevail. For example, in the sentence

I gave him John's hat,

it is interesting to know that the ending of the word *John's* is derived from the older genitive (or possessive) ending *es*, and that *him* is the dative case of *he*, denoting an indirect object. Again, in the sentence

He was given the book,

we are puzzled to explain the case of *he*, until we learn that the older form of the sentence would have been

*Him* was given the book,

in which *him* is a dative, and *the book* was the true subject. The change in the form of this sort of expression was probably made because the older form *Him was given*, etc., seemed ungrammatical; that is, it seemed more natural to say, *he was given*. Many of our expressions, such as *you are*, when one person is meant, are to be explained, not by guessing or by reasoning, but only by a knowledge of historical grammar, which traces such changes in the forms and usages of our language through the printed records of a thousand years. Although historical grammar gives no direct help in writing or speaking the language of

today, a knowledge of it may save us from many unwise judgments as to what is right or wrong in language.

#### 4. What grammar includes.

Modern English grammar is now understood to include all those facts of the English language which a foreigner would need to learn in order to use it correctly;—except the meaning, pronunciation, and spelling of the words, which things are the province of the dictionary; and except the ways of using the language *effectively*, which things belong to composition and rhetoric. Here is the point where grammar and composition overlap each other. When our foreigner is learning that he must say *I am* and *we are*, instead of *I is* and *we is*, he is learning English grammar. When he learns to say *he is* rather than *he iss* he is learning something about English that does not belong to grammar. But when he learns the force of the phrases in a sentence like this:

*His money being stolen*, he had to walk the streets hungry, he is learning things that belong both to grammar and composition.

Grammar deals in particular with two things: *inflection* and *syntax*.

By *inflection* we mean changes in the forms of words to indicate changes in relationship: as *I run*, *he runs*; *I am*, *he is*; *I go*, *to him*, etc. To this department of grammar belong also such combinations as verb phrases, as *might be*, *is eaten*, *have been*, and the like.

By *syntax* we mean the logical relations to each other of the parts of the sentence, and of the various types of sentences.

### 5. The form of the sentence:

The sentence is the *unit of thought*; that is, in our talking or writing we usually think from sentence to sentence. A sentence may be defined, for convenience, as a group of words which expresses a thought or several related thoughts, and which, in writing, begins with a capital letter and ends with a period, question-mark, or exclamation-point. The sentence must contain at least one subject and one predicate, as in the following examples:

1. I roved o'er many a hill.
2. A gentle answer did the old man make.
3. Give her wings that she may fly.
4. Lives there a man whose sole delights are trivial pomp and empty noise?
5. The savage seldom turned to look at his followers, and never spoke.

But this definition of a sentence, if taken too rigidly, is at once seen not to be sufficient. In such an instance as this,

Shall we calmly endure tyranny? No! a thousand times no!

the answer to the question is *logically*, that is, so far as its meaning is concerned, as truly a sentence as the question is. For it means,

We shall not calmly endure tyranny.

Since, however, it has not the *form* of the sentence, it can not be regarded as a sentence of the ordinary type. The term sentence must be understood, therefore, as indicating a *form of expression*, quite as much as a *complete thought*.

Again, in such an instance as

Come. We must be going,

the idea in the first word is as complete as in the sentence which follows it. But it has only one of the elements of the sentence, the predicate. The subject exists in the minds of the speaker and his hearer. And so, if it is a sentence, it is a sentence of incomplete form.

How sweet his music!

is another example of a sentence of incomplete form. In this sentence, it is the predicate *is* that is omitted. This incompleteness in form is, of course, no more an error or an impropriety of expression than the simple *yes* or *no* which we give in answer to questions. On the contrary, it gives to our expression a desirable brevity and liveliness. Such expressions may be considered as *abridged*, or *elliptical*, sentences.

But there is another type of incomplete sentence, or no-sentence, often used even by well-known writers, which is less defensible. Here are two examples from a well-known book:

A very perfect example of the great master's work. His long, fair hair, the pliable, nervous fingers, which he had

put down as he was bid, the strenuous tension of his little figure under a sense of injustice; and, above all, his beautiful eyes now brimmed over the eyelashes as the waters of a lake well up through the reeds that fringe its banks.

These sentences really mean just nothing that is clear and comprehensible. The second is especially bad. The sentiments may be very pretty; but one is inclined to ask, Well, what are you trying to say? What do you mean? What do you want to tell us about "his long fair hair," etc.? The trouble is that the sentence omits one important part, the predicate; and unlike the sentence quoted above,

How sweet his music!

it does not suggest what the predicate should be.

Another common form of imperfect sentence is the subordinate clause. For example,

Which he could not do.  
Whence all their troubles come.  
If we could only believe.

Such sentences are to be avoided. They may sometimes be effective in the hands of skilled writers. But beginners in the art of writing will do well to let them alone. They are too likely to give the reader the impression that the writer is dull or careless.

Sentences may be composed of several sentences, each of which would make complete sense if standing alone.

1. The breaking waves dashed high  
    On a stern and rock-bound coast,  
    And the woods against a stormy sky  
    Their giant branches tossed.
2. I must have hit one of them, for he sang out and gave back a step, and the rest stopped as if a little disconcerted.

Each of these might be made into two complete sentences. It thus appears again that the sentence is determined partly by the completeness with which it expresses a thought, and partly by its form.

## 6. Elements of the sentence.

The sentence, in its full form, contains two fundamental parts: *subject* and *predicate*. The subject is the word or group of words that designate the thing about which the assertion is made, or the question asked:

1. *The sun* did shine so cold.
2. *The old man, bent with years and labor,* rose slowly from his seat.
3. *Seeing* is believing.
4. *To lie* will not serve your purpose now.
5. *Fine words butter no parsnips* is an old proverb.
6. It is easy *to blame others*.

In the foregoing examples the italicized words are the subjects of the sentence, and the words in ordinary type are the predicate. In some of these sentences, however, a closer analysis will show that there are certain words of the subject which are the exact or definite thing spoken of, and certain words of the predicate which are the exact or definite thing said about



them, in a special and peculiar sense. In 1, *sun* and *did shine* are such words; in 2, *man* and *rose*. These words are called the *simple subject* and *simple predicate* in distinction from the whole subject and whole predicate. In much of our expression, we have a whole subject and whole predicate consisting of a simple subject and certain modifying words, and a simple predicate and certain modifying words. The simple subject is a noun or pronoun, or a group of words used as a noun, and the simple predicate is a verb. Select the simple subjects and the simple predicates in the following.

### 7. Exercise.

1. The Lord is my shepherd.
2. Waters on a starry night are beautiful and fair.
3. Not to be outdone in kindness, we made way for the new arrivals.
4. Hear the sledges with the bells!
5. It is easy to say what we ought to do.
6. There was never yet philosopher could bear the toothache patiently.
7. Who are ye, that we should obey?
8. His long, waving hair, white with the snows of many winters, gave him an aspect of great benignity.
9. In each generation there have been men of fashion who have mistaken themselves for gentlemen.
10. When we sit down alone with our own minds we are, if we are candid with ourselves, sometimes startled to find them dull and empty.

### 8. Syntax.

Syntax is the name given to that part of grammar which deals with the forms of sentences, and the logi-

cal relations of the parts of the sentences to each other. In studying the syntax of the sentence,

A big dog bounded eagerly up the steps,

we should point out the subject, the predicate, the modifiers of the subject and of the predicate, and the relation to each other of the various words which make up the various groups of words. Thus: The complete subject is *a big dog*; the complete predicate, *bounded eagerly up the steps*. The simple subject is *dog*, and its modifiers (adjectival) are *a* and *big*; the simple predicate is *bounded* and its modifiers (adverbial) are *eagerly* and *up the steps*. The last group of words is also explained as a prepositional phrase, composed of a preposition and its object.

### 9. The types of sentences.

Syntax takes account also of the forms or types of sentences; of the various subjects and predicates as they are related logically to each other.

(a.) Simple sentences contain subjects and predicates, of which the modifiers *are not clauses*.

Note: a simple sentence may contain more than one subject or more than one predicate.

1. John called us.
2. John and Dick called us.
3. John called us, and urged us to hurry.
4. In the morning we arose and broke camp.
5. Carrying our packs, we trudged over the mountains.

(b.) Complex sentences contain a simple sentence, and one or more clauses, in a subordinate relation to the simple sentence. In such sentences, the simple sentence is called the principal sentence (or element), and the other is called the subordinate part (or element). The clause may be used in relation either to the subject or to the predicate.

When the clock struck eleven they prepared to leave. They told their hostess that she had managed to make them forget their business cares. The hostess, who had more cares herself than any of them, only smiled graciously in reply.

(c.) Compound sentences are composed of two or more complete sentences, each of which may be either a simple or a complex sentence.

Mrs. Cratchit made the gravy (ready beforehand in a little saucepan) hissing hot; Master Peter mashed the potatoes with incredible vigor; Miss Belinda sweetened up the apple-sauce; Martha dusted the hot plates, and Bob took Tiny Tim beside him in a tiny corner at the table.

#### 10. Elements of the sentence.

In the study of the sentence we have already seen (§ 8) that there may be other words or groups of words than the simple subject and simple predicate. In the sentence,

When the children leaped from the schoolhouse door they began at once to show their delight by shouting and tumbling in the soft snow,

the words *When the children leaped from the schoolhouse door* are equivalent to an adverb, modifying

began; so are the words *at once*, and the words *by shouting and tumbling in the soft snow*.

In the sentence,

The soldiers of the Revolution, who were in camp at Valley Forge, suffered great hardships,

the subject *soldiers* is modified by *the*, and by the groups of words *of the Revolution* and *who were in camp at Valley Forge*. These words and groups of words are therefore equivalent to adjectives.

A sentence may therefore be composed of four fundamental elements: The simple subject, the simple predicate, the modifiers of the subject, and the modifiers of the predicate.

One other important element of the sentence must be noticed here. Many verbs remain incomplete in meaning unless accompanied (usually followed) by some noun or pronoun. Towards this noun or pronoun the action of the verb seems to be directed in a peculiar way.

John threw the *stick* into the water.

We give no *gifts* to undeservers.

I saw *him* but now.

Such words are called the *objects* of the verb, and the verbs which require such words to complete their meanings are called *transitive* verbs. The object of the verb is adverbial in its nature, in so far as it limits the meaning or use of the verb. But custom and convenience lead to its being regarded as a different element of the sentence and given a different name, that of *object*.

**11. Exercise.**

In the following sentences indicate the simple subject, the simple predicate, and the modifiers of each. Where an object of the principal verb exists, indicate that also.

1. A soldier of the legion lay dying in Algiers.
2. The gentleness of heaven is on the sea.
3. Dull would he be of soul who could pass by a sight so touching in its majesty.
4. The little man had jumped back when Markheim had so suddenly confronted him with the mirror.
5. A troop of strange children ran at his heels, hooting after him, and pointing at his gray beard.
6. But still the red-faced gentleman extolled the good old times.
7. Then followed another time of chattering and trials and failures.
8. His red, rough hands, which have done many a good day's work with the hammer and the adze, are half covered by the delicate lace ruffles at his wrists.
9. Then came the railroads, bringing the white hunter with his deadly aim.
10. At daybreak on the bleak sea beach  
    A fisherman stood aghast,  
    To see the form of a maiden fair  
    Lashed close to a drifting mast.

**12. Phrases.**

A phrase is a group of words which does not of itself make complete sense, but which does have a logical relation to the rest of the sentence in which it stands.

In these sentences the groups of words in italics are phrases:

1. The snow came on *before its time*.
2. Everybody was *in good looks* and *in good spirits*.
3. They were all eager *to go with us*.
4. *No danger being near*, he would dive into his den and reappear *in a twinkling*.
5. There Honor comes, *a pilgrim gray*.
6. Ah! 'Tis hard *to die of fire!*

Phrases are named from the word that introduces them, or from some important word in them. The phrases in 1 and 2 above are *prepositional* phrases because introduced by a preposition. In 3 and 6 we have *infinitive* phrases, introduced by a verb in the infinitive mood. In 4 the first phrase is a *participial* phrase, taking its name from the participle. In 5 we have an example of the *noun* phrase.

Phrases are further distinguished and named according to their function in the sentence. They may play the part of an adjective, an adverb, or a noun. In 1 and 4 above the phrases are adverbial, that is equivalent to an adverb. In 2 the phrases are equivalent to adjectives, and are called adjective phrases or adjectival phrases. In 3 the phrase is complementary, that is, completes the idea in the word *eager* in the main sentence. In 5, the phrase is appositional, being equivalent to a noun in apposition with the noun *Honor*. In 6, also, the infinitive phrase is equivalent to a noun and is the subject of the sentence.

It is to be especially observed that these phrases, being equivalent to nouns, adjectives, or adverbs in their relation to the whole sentence, may often be equivalent to some single word, or to some other group of words, which could be substituted for the original

phrase without altering the meaning of the sentence. For example, in 2 above, we might say *cheerful* instead of *in good spirits*; in 4 we might say *instantly* or *immediately*, or *at once*, instead of *in a twinkling*. Such changes often improve the clearness or ease of a sentence; and in order to write well we must have sufficient command over the language to make such changes.

### 13. Exercise.

For the phrases in these sentences use single words, and tell what part of speech the word so used is.

1. These things were done in secrecy.
2. He was a man of valor.
3. To be generous wins friends.
4. Many a time have we gone forth together.
5. As lover of his country and leader of the army he won undying fame.

In the following sentences express in different words the ideas contained in the phrases.

1. He came up to me with open arms.
2. In youth the tulip-tree has a smooth trunk.
3. He paused, dreading the effects of his confession.
4. She was pale and quiet as a meditative statue, clasping her hands on her lap.
5. Touched by this pitiful appeal, he took up her cause heart and soul.
6. Not to be outdone in generosity, I gave him my horse and armor.
7. To obey instantly and without question is the duty of a soldier.

8. A forlorn and pitiful figure, he sat there day after day.
9. To do the best for others is finally to do the best for ourselves.
10. A teardrop trembled from its source.
11. In robe and crown the king stepped down,  
To meet and greet her on her way.

In writing English or in reading it, the importance of the phrase is seen to lie in its convenience in expressing certain relations. What is most important to the writer, therefore, is not the grammatical classification of the phrase, but the relation it indicates. The grammatical relation of the phrase may even be uncertain, but if the meaning of the sentence is clear, it is enough. Such sentences as the following are examples.

1. They forgave his offence; *that is to say*, they ceased to remind him of it.
2. *No danger being near*, the squirrel came out of hiding.
3. My dazzled sight he oft deceives, *a brother of the dancing leaves*.
4. The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls.

In 1, the phrase *that is to say*, is an idiom commonly employed to introduce a different statement of an idea already expressed. In 2, the phrase is a way of saying *why* the squirrel came out of hiding. In 3, the phrase refers to *he*, and tells in what way or why *he* deceives the sight. In 4, the phrase *beneath him* may be regarded as either adjective or adverb.

In all of these instances, the important thing is the *meaning* of the phrase, in relation to the rest of the



sentence. This is what we must think of, both when we read and when we judge our own writing.

#### 14. Clauses.

A clause is a group of words containing subject and predicate, but not expressing a complete thought. Clauses are usually introduced either by a relative pronoun or by a subordinate conjunction.

In the following sentences the underscored parts are clauses.

1. *If you're waking*, call me early.
2. I will not tell *how far he fled*.
3. He instantly recalled the name,  
And *who he was* and *whence he came*.
4. They all made a rush at Alice *the moment she appeared*.
5. *When the order was given* the whole regiment opened fire.
6. The fur *that warms a monarch* warmed a bear.

In the foregoing sentences, the clauses have a relation to the rest of the sentences in which they stand. This relation is sometimes that of a noun, as in 2 and 3; sometimes that of an adjective, as in 6; sometimes that of an adverb, as in 4. When so used they are designated as noun clauses, or adjective clauses, or adverbial clauses, as the case may be. They are also otherwise named: as relative clauses, when introduced by a relative pronoun, as in 6; or temporal clauses, when introduced by a word indicating a relation of time, as in 4; or conditional clauses, when indicating a condition, as in 1; or concessive clauses, when in-

troduced by a word indicating concession, like *though* or *although*.

One of the most common tasks in writing is to choose between different ways of saying the same thing. As we have seen, phrases and clauses may have the same grammatical relation to the rest of the sentence, and a phrase may have the same *meaning* as a clause. It is good practice, therefore, to substitute one form for another.

### 15. Exercise.

In the following sentences substitute some other form (word, phrase, or clause) for the italicized passages.

1. *As a rule* the children hunt only in parties.
2. All the while he acted like a man *out of his wits*.
3. For some time Rip lay *musng on this scene*.
4. *When Odin came back* Hermod took the bridle from his father's hand.
5. Go to the herdsman, *him who keeps the swine*.
6. *When the night came on* we gathered about the great open fire *roaring up the chimney*. No sound of *living thing* disturbed the great solitude outside. Only *from time to time* we heard the wind *wailing through the forest*. *When we grew warm and comfortable* our guide began to tell old tales of the wilderness. He told *how the Indians had hunted and fought here; how the white settlers had come; how they had made friends of the Indians; and, finally, how they had quarreled*, and how the Red Men had been driven out. His tales were vivid, and, *to our excited minds*, the forest outside seemed to be *peopled* with the ghosts of the past.

The following extract, from Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*, illustrates well her skill in the use of phrases and clauses.

Fanny, whether near or from her cousins, whether in the school-room, the drawing-room, or the shrubbery, was equally forlorn, finding something to fear in every person and place. She was disheartened by Lady Bertram's silence, awed by Sir Thomas's grave looks, and quite overcome by Mrs. Norris's admonitions. Her elder cousins mortified her by reflections on her size, and abashed her by noticing her shyness: Miss Lee wondered at her ignorance, and the servants sneered at her clothes; and when to these sorrows was added the idea of the brothers and sisters among whom she had always been important as playfellow, instructress, and nurse, the despondence that sunk her little heart was severe.

The grandeur of the house astonished, but could not console her. The rooms were too large for her to move in with ease; whatever she touched she expected to injure, and she crept about in constant terror of something or other, often retreating towards her own chamber to cry; and the little girl who was spoken of in the drawing-room when she left it at night, as seeming so desirably sensible of her good fortune, ended every day's sorrows by sobbing herself to sleep.

## CHAPTER II

### HOW TO TELL A STORY

#### 16. Introductory.

Telling a story is always simple though seldom easy. First, make sure that you have a story to tell. You need not think of something startling, extraordinary, or instructive. If for any reason an incident remains pleasantly in your memory, skill and common-sense on your part can fix it in some one else's memory almost as pleasantly. We never do remember an experience, however, unless it is a little different from any other we ever had. It may have been very simple; it may have been, as we say, unimportant; but it must have been in some particular or other a thing by itself. This difference it will be your point to bring out. It will be the point of the story.

Of course no two things are ever just alike. Everything, if we are only keen enough to see it, has its own special marks. Part of the skill of story-telling lies in sharpening one's wits to discover these marks.

A very good story may be spoiled in the telling. To avoid this, take warning from the bore. He is "long-winded" and rambles on without regard to his own time or any one else's; he stuffs his story with trivial details that give his hearers no notion of what his experience was especially like to him. If we keep

in mind that the remembrance of our experience gives us a special sort of pleasure and that we must in some way give just this sort of pleasure and no other to the reader; if we keep to this point; if we know always what we are driving at, we shall avoid the fault of the bore.

But we must also avoid being bare. An outline of a story is not a story. Indeed, it makes very dull reading. We must tell our hearers enough so that they can put themselves in our place, imagine that they are seeing and feeling just what we saw and felt.

The art of telling a story then consists: (1) in knowing just what the point is which makes it worth while, (2) in omitting a great many facts because they are dull and really don't help on the story at all, and, (3) in remembering very vividly or inventing very skilfully just what will keep our readers thoroughly interested in picturing how it all came about.

### **17. An exercise in abridgment.**

At this point of the work the learner can profitably try his hand at retelling a story within the compass of about one-tenth of the original. The story that is selected should be prose, should be complete in itself, should have an obvious plot, with plenty of action and a vivid descriptive quality. The original story should first be studied, and the recitations on it should be a thorough discussion of the point of the story, the importance of the various characters in developing the point; the existence of digressions and episodes if there are any, the sentence with which the story can

end in the abridgment, and in a few sample paragraphs, the nature of the description and the reasons for it. In these paragraphs the most telling sentences might be noticed by the class. In discussing the point care should be taken not to regard it as didactic but as dramatic, humorous, imaginative, or fanciful. If material is available, a second and third exercise of the same sort will prove good practice. Good stories for the purpose are: "Tom Walker and the Devil" in Irving's *Tales of a Traveller*. "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" in *The Sketch Book*. The "Ambitious Guest" and "The Gray Champion" in Hawthorne's *Twice Told Tales*, and those in this volume, pp. 26-28 and 38-40.

The class should remember not to copy so much of the first part of the original that they will be obliged to treat the latter half too scantily. Their abridgment when finished should be perfectly clear to one who has never seen the original. It should be as vivid as possible and keep to the essential facts.

### 18. The point of a story.

Relate a personal experience which will fit one of the following titles:

- A Capsize.
- A Runaway.
- Left Ten Miles from Home.
- A Successful Experiment.
- An Unpleasant Surprise.
- My First Scare.
- An Unexpected Visitor.
- An Unexpected Piece of Luck.

**19. Have a point and keep to it.**

Whoever reads your theme should be able to say: The writer of that has done just what he set out to do. First ask yourself what makes your story worth telling at all. The answer to that question will give you your point. Then have one aim in mind: to make that point as clearly and forcibly as possible. A skillful lawyer admits into his client's story only what will strengthen his client's case. A good public speaker admits into his anecdotes only what makes them good weapons in his arguments. The writer of the following incidents has admitted only what will help us feel just as she felt at one instant of her life. In every case a story should contain only what counts.

We had just passed out of the gate to the hot, dusty road leading to the beach, when we heard an alarming but unmistakable snorting and stamping out on the path. With a frightened glance down the lane, which confirmed our suspicions, we all, except father and my brother, dashed in behind the palings and closed the gate behind us. There we stood, rather scared, as the horse, for such it was, came tearing down the road toward us. He had evidently escaped when he was being harnessed, for part of his trappings hung from him and far behind him. We saw two men waving and shouting in hot chase. The horse was fast nearing us, and swayed blindly from one side of the road to the other. We were now really frightened, for it looked as though the creature would stop for no obstacle and be likely to crash into the fence behind which we were quaking. Mother was terribly frightened on account of father and Louis, who were out in the road armed with weapons in the shape of umbrellas and stones and ready for the unwelcome visitor.

"Here he comes! Look out!" I yelled to the two block-

ing his path. But as the horse neared them he seemed surprised by the bobbing figures before him, wildly waving umbrellas in the air; with a swerve, crash! he went into the fence right before us, and alarmed and somewhat brought to his senses by the shock, he turned and galloped off, leaving a shattered fence and a frightened group behind him.

M. C.

## 20. When you get through, stop.

Most of us find it difficult to stop talking when we have said all we have to say. Before folding your theme, improve it, if possible, by cutting out the last three or four sentences. If you have got a wetting, it is not necessary to tell us that later you put on dry clothes. If a runaway horse has thrown you out into the mud, that will be the most interesting place for the reader to leave you. Don't try to wind your theme up with a conclusion. End it, if you can, at your strongest point.

## AS ANOTHER SAW US.

Mr. B—— was a gentleman whom my sister and I had the pleasure of meeting last summer on the steamer "Campania." He was an Englishman, but hardly the type which people complain of as being stiff and reserved. In our first half-hour's conversation he informed us that he had been around the world twice, partly on pleasure and partly on business, that he didn't think much of New York department stores, and that he was a teetotaler and a Presbyterian. In return he learned from us facts which caused him to regard us in the light of phenomena for the rest of the voyage. The deck steward was serving tea. I declined it.

"Will you not have some tea?" questioned Mr. B——, who, having supplied himself with the fullest cup on the



tray, and six crackers, now seized another cup and offered it to me.

"No, thank you. I don't care for it," I replied.

"Beg pardon?"

"I—don't—like—it," very distinctly.

"Ah, gracious! Do you not, now?"

"No."

"Ah, really?"

"Yes."

"But tea is a very good thing to drink, is it not?"

"Yes, perhaps it is, but I don't like it. I *hate* it."

"Is that so?" inquired Mr. B——, in a tone in which deep pity and considerable contempt were faintly disguised by politeness.

Like "Father William," I had "answered three questions, and that was enough," particularly since they were all the same question, so I made no reply to the last inquiry. Mr. B—— gazed at me reproachfully for a moment, and then turned, and talked with my sister. Presently she mentioned some occurrence at college. Mr. B—— started in surprise.

"Do you still go to school?" he asked in great astonishment..

"No, I'm in college," she returned.

"But your hair is up!" he gasped.

"I *beg* your pardon?"

"Your hair is up! Your dress is long!"

"Why, certainly! But what has that to do with college?"

"Why, in England, when young ladies wear long dresses and put their hair up, they leave school altogether. They go out into society! They amuse themselves!"

"Well, in America girls go into society and to college too."

"But in England, after young ladies put their hair up, they *enjoy* themselves! Do you go to college because you like to or because you have to?"

"Why," said my sister, both amused and surprised, "I go because I like to. I *do* enjoy myself immensely. Why should I stop studying because my hair is up?"

Mr. B—— replied with a puzzled “Ah, gracious! Really, now?” and a faint murmur about “young ladies in England,” and surveyed us both wonderingly for some time.

A. M.

Write a story on some such topic as suggested on page 21, observing especially the instructions on pages 22-23.

## 21. Be clear.

Tell your story so that the reader will clearly understand why it has interested you. To do that he must know what happens, to what sort of people it happens, and how and why it happens. Usually he should know something as to where and when it happens. But don't burden him with explanations of matters with which he can have no concern. Some writers start every personal experience from their front doorstep. That isn't necessary. If you are telling an Adirondack story, why not begin it in the Adirondacks? Remember, however, to construct your incident so that the reader not only will understand but will believe it. And try to arrange it as far as possible so that it will explain itself.

One day when I was about five years old, my father was sitting in a ground floor room of ours in which washing had been going on, and where a large fire of oak logs had been left. His viola in his arms, he was playing and singing by himself near the fire—for it was very cold. Looking into the fire, he chanced to see in the middle of the most ardent flames a little creature like a lizard disporting itself in the midst of the intensest heat. Suddenly aware of what it was, he called my sister and me and pointed it out to us children.

Then he gave me a sound box on the ears, which made me cry bitterly, on which he soothed me with kind words, saying: "My dear little fellow, I did not hurt you for any harm you had done, but only that you might remember that the lizard in the fire there is a salamander, which never had been seen for a certainty by any one before." Then he kissed me and gave me some farthings.

*Benvenuto Cellini*, translated by ANNIE MACDOWELL.

## 22. Don't exaggerate.

An escape from a great danger makes a good story if it is told in a sensible way, but there is no bore like the man who gets excited in his effort to be interesting. Don't try to be thrilling all the time. There is a great difference between a hair-breadth escape and a tragic experience, and not all good stories must be hair-breadth escapes. A simple story well told makes interesting reading.

Before nine next morning the two canoes were installed in a light country cart at Etreux: and we were soon following them along the side of a pleasant valley full of hop-gardens and poplars. Agreeable villages lay here and there on the slope of the hill; notably, Tupigny, with the hop-poles hanging their garlands in the very street, and the houses clustered with grapes. There was a faint enthusiasm on our passage; weavers put their heads to the windows; children cried out in ecstasy at sight of the two "boaties"—barquettes: and bloused pedestrians, who were acquainted with our charioteer, jested with him on the nature of his freight.

We had a shower or two, but light and flying. The air was clean and sweet among all these green fields and green things growing. There was not a touch of autumn in the weather. And when, at Vadencourt, we launched from a little lawn opposite a mill, the sun broke forth and set all the leaves shining in the valley of the Oise.

Towards afternoon we got fairly drunken with the sunshine and exhilaration of the pace. We could no longer contain ourselves and our content. The canoes were too small for us; we must be out and stretch ourselves on shore. And so in a green meadow we bestowed our limbs on the grass, and smoked deifying tobacco and proclaimed the world excellent. It was the last good hour of the day, and I dwelt upon it with extreme complacency.

On one side of the valley, high up on the chalky summit of the hill, a ploughman with his team appeared and disappeared at regular intervals. At each revelation he stood still for a few seconds against the sky: for all the world (as the Cigarette declared) like a toy Burns who had just ploughed up the Mountain Daisy. He was the only living thing within view, unless we are to count the river.

Shortly after our reembarkation, while I was leading by a long way, and still full of a noble, exulting spirit in honor of the sun, the swift pace, and the church bells, the river made one of its leonine pounces round a corner, and I was ware of another fallen tree within a stone-cast. I had my backboard down in a trice, and aimed for a place where the trunk seemed high enough above the water, and the branches not too thick to let me slip below. When a man has just vowed eternal brotherhood with the universe, he is not in a temper to take great determinations coolly, and this, which might have been a very important determination for me, had not been taken under a happy star. The tree caught me about the chest, and while I was yet struggling to make less of myself and get through, the river took the matter out of my hands, and bereaved me of my boat. The Arethusa swung round broadside on, leaned over, ejected so much of me as still remained on board, and thus disencumbered, whipped under the tree, righted, and went merrily away down stream.

I do not know how long it was before I scrambled on to the tree to which I was left clinging, but it was longer than I cared about. My thoughts were of a grave and almost sombre character, but I still clung to my paddle. The stream ran away with my heels as fast as I could pull up my

shoulders, and I seemed, by the weight, to have all the water of the Oise in my trouser pockets. You can never know, till you try it, what a dead pull a river makes against a man. Death himself had me by the heels, for this was his last ambuscado, and he must now join personally in the fray. And still I held to my paddle. At last I dragged myself on to my stomach on the trunk, and lay there a breathless sop, with a mingled sense of humor and injustice. A poor figure I must have presented to Burns upon the hill-top with his team. But there was the paddle in my hand. On my tomb, if ever I have one, I mean to get these words inscribed: "He clung to his paddle."

*Abridged from STEVENSON'S Inland Voyage.*

### 23. Exercise.

Write a story in which your especial aim shall be to tell the incident clearly and without exaggeration. Possibly one of the following subjects may suggest something to you.

An Exciting Game.

My First Party.

A Sleigh Ride.

Learning to Skate.

A Trip on the Water.

### 24. Don't moralize.

For the point of their themes, some people select a little moral. Such themes are easy to write but they are stupid to read. Instead of following their example, aim to bring out the humor of some situation you have been in, the excitement you have had in barely escaping from an accident, your enjoyment in meeting an odd character, your curiosity in wondering

what was about to happen and how your curiosity was satisfied, the novelty you felt in some situation you have been in; or try to make up a story so skilfully that it will seem to every reader an experience of your own.

Our father had left a large supply of farm implements . . . ; but after his death our neighbors were always ready to borrow them; and when we boys were old enough to look after them a great many things which this neighbor and that said belonged to us were not to be found. I once went for an article which the neighbor confessed belonged to me, but he said he couldn't do without it, and he wished I would bring it back when I had done with it. Did I?

At length everything seemed to give out. The potato cart and hay cart were utter wrecks and could no more be used. The holes of the ox-bows had worn enormously large in the yokes, and finally they split out, and the yoke came to the honorable death of old age like all the rest. Owing to some troubles in the district, there was to be no school all winter long, and we resolved to see what we could do. Our financial resources were only sufficient to buy a new plow and a pair of cart wheels. We resolved to make the rest—a resolve at which our neighbors laughed. I was then about thirteen or fourteen, and my brother two years older, with a natural gift for whittling out things. We cut down in our wood lot a nice yellow birch and obtained two lengths for yokes. We had a board pattern from a neighbor, and began to hew the log to the pattern. For tools, we had an axe, drawshave, jack-plane, and an augur. The poor log was never left alone; while one was taking care of the barn the other was at the yoke. It was soon in shape, so that we could carry it into the kitchen in the evening and work upon it before the fire, until our mother would make us leave it and go to bed. It was very difficult to work the curved surface with nothing but a drawshave. We heard of a man who had a spokeshave and we borrowed it. The yoke was

splendidly finished. We scraped it nicely with pieces of glass and then polished the surface by hard rubbing with a dry stick. It was at length a "thing of beauty." But the holes were not bored. We bored them the best way we could—and ruined the yoke. The holes were not parallel and the bows would not enter. When we saw there was no remedy our hearts broke. If I did not cry it was because my grief, disappointment, and sense of loss were too deep for tears.

Mayor Stone came along and scolded us for trying to do what few men can do well. But he comforted us. He praised the work. He said no better yoke could be made. "Make another just like that and make it straight on the back and I will bore the holes." We went at it and made it, but as he did not come the very minute we wanted him we invented a way that would hold the augur parallel to itself all the time in making the four holes. It was a complete success and our hearts swelled with joy. We gave it the highest possible finish. It was an improvement on our first one, and we were glad of our misfortunes.

## 25. The point of view.

Three hundred years ago, Miguel de Cervantes wrote a story known as *Don Quixote*. This Don Quixote was represented as a fine old Spanish gentleman, straitened in circumstances and stricken in his wits, who, with rusty armor and pasteboard helmet, went out to redress the grievances of the poor and the oppressed. His miserable horse he thought to be a noble steed, every inn he saw he thought to be a castle. And every one he met on his travels seemed to him an extraordinary person. Sancho Panza was a muddle-headed, fat old peasant whom he took with him as his noble squire.

Recite the following story in the third person but as

if everything really occurred as Don Quixote imagined it to occur.

Don Quixote and his squire were going along, when, on the road they were following, Don Quixote perceived approaching them a large and thick cloud of dust, on seeing which he turned to Sancho and said, "This is the day, O Sancho, on which will be seen the boon my fortune is reserving for me; this, I say, is the day on which as much as on any other shall be displayed the might of my arm and on which I shall do deeds that shall remain written in the book of fame for all ages to come. Seest thou that cloud of dust which rises yonder? Well, then, all that is churned up by a vast army composed of various and countless nations that comes marching there."

"According to that there must be two," said Sancho, "for on this opposite side also there rises just such another cloud of dust."

Don Quixote turned to look and found that it was true, and rejoicing exceedingly, he concluded that they were two armies about to engage and encounter in the midst of that broad plain; for at all times and seasons his fancy was full of the battles, enchantments, adventures, crazy feats, loves, and defiances that are recorded in the books of chivalry, and everything he said, thought, or did had reference to such things. Now the cloud of dust he had seen was raised by two great droves of sheep coming along the same road in opposite directions, which, because of the dust, did not become visible until they drew near, but Don Quixote asserted so positively that they were armies that Sancho was led to believe it and say, "Well, and what are we to do, señor?"

"What?" said Don Quixote: "give aid and assistance to the weak and those who need it; and thou must know, Sancho, that this which comes opposite to us is conducted and led by the mighty emperor Alifanfaron, lord of the great isle of Trapobana; this other that marches behind me is that of his enemy the king of the Geramantas, Pentapolin of the Bare Arm, for he always goes into battle with his right arm bare."



"But why are these two lords such enemies?" asked Sancho.

"They are at enmity," replied Don Quixote, "because this Alifanfaron is a furious pagan and is in love with the daughter of Pentapolin, who is a very beautiful and more-over gracious lady, and a Christian, and her father is unwilling to bestow her on the pagan king unless he first abandons the religion of his false prophet Mahomet, and adopts his own."

"By my beard," said Sancho, "but Pentapolin does quite right, and I will help him as much as I can."

"In that thou wilt do what is thy duty, Sancho," said Don Quixote; "for to engage in battles of this sort it is not requisite to be a dubbed knight."

"That I can well understand," answered Sancho; "but where shall we put this ass where we may be sure to find him after the fray is over? for I believe it has not been the custom so far to go into battle on a beast of this kind."

"That is true," said Don Quixote, "and what you had best do with him is to leave him to take his chance whether he be lost or not, for the horses we shall have when we come out victors will be so many that even Rocinante will run a risk of being changed for another. But attend to me and observe, for I wish to give thee some account of the chief knights who accompany these two armies; and that thou mayest the better see and mark, let us withdraw to that hillock which rises yonder, whence both armies may be seen."

They did so, and placed themselves on a rising ground from which the two droves that Don Quixote made armies of might have been plainly seen if the clouds of dust they raised had not obscured them and blinded the sight; nevertheless, seeing in his imagination what he did not see and what did not exist, he began thus in a loud voice: "That knight whom thou seest yonder in yellow armor, who bears on his shield a lion crowned crouching at the feet of a damsel, is the valiant Laurecalco, lord of the Silver Bridge; that one in armor with flowers of gold, who bears on his shield three crowns argent on an azure field, is the dreaded Mico-colembo, grand duke of Quirocia; that other of gigantic

frame, on his right hand, is the ever dauntless Brandabaran de Boliche, lord of the three Arabias, who for armor wears that serpent skin, and has for shield a gate which, according to tradition, is one of those of the temple that Samson brought to the ground when by his death he revenged himself on his enemies." And so he went on naming a number of knights of one squadron or the other out of his imagination, and to all he assigned off-hand their arms, colors, devices, and mottoes, carried away by the illusions of his unheard-of craze. Sancho Panza hung on his words without speaking, and from time to time turned to try if he could see the knights and giants his master was describing, and as he could not make out one of them he said to him, "Señor, devil take it if there's a sign of any man you talk of, knight or giant, in the whole thing; maybe it's all enchantment like the phantoms last night."

"How canst thou say that!" answered Don Quixote; "dost thou not hear the neighing of the steeds, the braying of the trumpets, the roll of the drums?"

"I hear nothing but a great bleating of ewes and sheep," said Sancho; which was true, for by this time the two flocks had come close.

"The fear thou art in, Sancho," said Don Quixote, "prevents thee from seeing or hearing correctly, for one of the effects of fear is to derange the senses and make things appear different from what they are; if thou art in such fear withdraw to one side and leave me to myself, for alone I suffice to bring victory to that side to which I shall give my aid;" and so saying he gave Rocinante the spur, and, putting the lance in rest, shot down the slope like a thunderbolt.

Sancho shouted after him, crying, "Come back, Señor Don Quixote; I vow to God they are sheep and ewes you are charging! Come back! Unlucky the father that begot me! What madness is this! Look, there is no giant, nor knight, nor cats, nor arms, nor shields quartered or whole, nor cups azure or bedeviled. What are you about? Sinner that I am before God!" But not for all these entreaties did Don Quixote turn back; on the contrary he went on shout-

ing out, "Ho, knights, ye who follow and fight under the banners of the valiant emperor Pentapolin of the Bare Arm, follow me all; ye shall see how easily I shall give him his revenge over his enemy Alifanfaron of Trapobana."

So saying, he dashed into the midst of the squadron of ewes, and began spearing them with as much spirit and intrepidity as if he were transfixing mortal enemies in earnest. The shepherds and drovers accompanying the flock shouted to him to desist; but, seeing it was no use, they ungirt their slings and began to salute his ears with stones as big as one's fist. Don Quixote gave no heed to the stones, but, letting drive right and left, kept saying, "Where art thou, proud Alifanfaron? Come before me; I am a single knight who would fain prove thy prowess hand to hand, and make thee yield thy life a penalty for the wrong thou dost to the valiant Pentapolin Garamanta."

Here came a sugar-plum from the brook that struck him on the side, and buried a couple of ribs in his side. Feeling himself so smitten, he imagined himself slain or badly wounded for certain, and, recollecting his liquor he drew out his flask, and putting it to his mouth began to pour the contents into his stomach; but ere he had succeeded in swallowing what seemed to him enough, there came another almond which struck him on the hand and on the flask so fairly that it smashed it to pieces, knocking three or four teeth and grinders out of his mouth in its course, and sorely crushing two fingers of his hand. Such was the force of the first blow and of the second that the poor knight in spite of himself came down backwards off his horse. The shepherds ran up, and felt sure they had killed him; so in all haste they collected their flock together, took up the dead beasts, of which there were more than seven, and made off without waiting to ascertain anything further.

All this time Sancho stood on the hill watching the crazy feats his master was performing, and tearing his beard and cursing the hour and the occasion when fortune had made him acquainted with him. Seeing him, then, brought to the ground, and that the shepherds had taken themselves off, he came down the hill and ran to him and found him in very

bad case, though not unconscious; and said he, "Did I not tell you to come back, Señor Don Quixote; and that what you were going to attack were not armies, but droves of sheep?"

"That's how that thief of a sage, my enemy, can alter and falsify things," answered Don Quixote; "thou must know, Sancho, that it is a very easy matter for those of his sort to make us take what form they choose; and this malignant being who persecutes me, envious of the glory he knew I was to win in this battle, has turned the squadrons of the enemy into droves of sheep. At any rate, do this much, I beg of thee, Sancho, to undeceive thyself, and see that which I say is true; mount thy ass and follow them quietly, and thou shalt see that when they have gone some little distance from this they will return to their original shape and, ceasing to be sheep, become men in all respects as I described them to thee at first. But go not just yet, for I want thy help and assistance; come hither and see how many of my teeth and grinders are missing, for I feel as if there was not one left in my mouth."

## 26. The point of view, continued.

Recite the story of Hamlet, Act I, Scene I, as if you were Bernardo; the story of the Taming of the Shrew, Act I, Scene I, as if you were Tranio.

## 27. Exercise.

Relate in writing a personal experience which will fit one of the following titles:

A Novel Point of View.

Put Yourself in My Place.

From a Car Window.

My First Visit to the Dentist's.

My First Business Experience.

My First Circus.

What I Saw of an Accident.

My First Evening Away from Home.

**28. Write as if your eyes had been alert, but remember that no one pair of eyes can see everything.**

There is no more vivid scene in *Ivanhoe* than the assault on *Front-de-bœuf's* castle. We see it through the narrow casement of a castle window as the Jewess *Rebecca*, standing there, describes it to *Ivanhoe*, the Norman knight lying on a couch within. Just because we see it from so limited a point of view, we see it vividly. The following is a selection from this scene. Is anything lost by giving us simply what *Rebecca* can see?

*Rebecca* could observe, from the number of men placed for the defence of this post (a fortification, defending a castle gate), that the besieged entertained apprehensions for its safety; and from the mustering of the assailants in a direction nearly opposite to the outwork, it seemed no less plain that it had been selected as a vulnerable point of attack.

These appearances she hastily communicated to *Ivanhoe*, and added, "The skirts of the woods seem lined with archers, although only a few are advanced from its dark shadow."

"Under what banner?" asked *Ivanhoe*.

"Under no ensign of war which I can observe," answered *Rebecca*.

"A singular novelty," muttered the knight, "to advance to storm such a castle without pennon or banner displayed. Seest thou who they be that act as leaders?"

"A knight, clad in sable armor, is the most conspicuous," said the Jewess; "he alone is armed from head to heel, and seems to assume the direction of all around him."

"What device does he have on his shield?" replied Ivanhoe.

"Something resembling a bar of iron, and a padlock painted blue on a black shield."

"A fetterlock and shacklebolt azure," said Ivanhoe; "I know not who may bear the device, but well I ween it might now be mine own. Canst thou not see the motto?"

"Scarce the device itself at this distance," replied Rebecca, "but when the sun flames fair upon his shield it shows as I tell you."

"Seem there no other leaders?" exclaimed the anxious inquirer.

"None of mark and distinction that I can behold from this station," said Rebecca, "but doubtless the other side of the castle is also assailed. They appear even now preparing to advance—God of Zion, protect us! What a dreadful sight! Those who advance first bear large shields and defenses made of plank; the others follow, bending their bows as they come on. They raise their bows! God of Moses, forgive the creatures Thou hast made."

There is no better scene in Dickens than the opening lines of *The Old Curiosity Shop*. Here we are not allowed to use our eyes at all, but we are made to listen to sounds on the street and to guess what they mean. A skilful writer never pretends to be everywhere at once and all eyes. He sees and describes a scene from one spot or one line of march. Don't fall into the error of those who write as if they could look behind them without turning round; don't pretend to see through a door without opening it; don't picture a river in one sentence as a silver thread in the landscape and in the next sentence as a broad stream with quantities of river craft upon its surface. Realize vividly how limited your point of view is and

make the most of all the telling sights, sounds, etc., that it will give you to help on your story. The following is written by George Borrow, an extraordinary adventurer who made many acquaintances among the gypsies and at one time distributed Bibles in Spain. It illustrates thoroughly how a vivid writer keeps to his point of view.

On a certain night I had retired to rest rather more early than usual, being slightly indisposed. I soon fell asleep, and had continued so for some hours, when I was suddenly aroused by the opening of the door of the small apartment in which I lay. I started up, and beheld (my landlady) Maria Diaz, with a lamp in her hand, enter the apartment. I observed that her features, which were in general peculiarly calm and placid, wore a somewhat startled expression.

"What is the hour and what brings you here?" I demanded.

"Señor," said she, closing the door and coming up to the bedside, "it is close upon midnight; but a messenger belonging to the police has just entered the house and demanded to see you. I told him that it was impossible for that your worship was in bed. Whereupon he sneezed in my face, and said that he would see you if you were in your coffin. He has all the look of a goblin, and has thrown me into a tremor. I am far from being a timid person, as you are aware, Don Jorge; but I confess that I never cast my eyes on these wretches of the police, but my heart dies away within me! I know them but too well, and what they are capable of."

"Pooh," said I, "be under no apprehension; let him come in, I fear him not, whether he be alguazil or hobgoblin. Stand, however, at the doorway, that you may be a witness of what takes place, as it is more than probable that he comes at this unseasonable hour to create a disturbance, that he may have an opportunity of making an unfavor-

able report to his principals, like the fellow on the former occasion."

The hostess left the apartment, and I heard her say a word or two to some one in the passage, whereupon there was a loud sneeze, and in a moment after a singular figure appeared in the doorway. It was that of a very old man, with long white hair, which escaped from beneath the eaves of an exceedingly high-peaked hat. He stooped considerably, and moved along with a shambling gait. I could not see much of his face, which, as the landlady stood behind him with the lamp, was consequently in deep shadow. I could observe, however, that his eyes sparkled like those of a ferret. He advanced to the foot of the bed, in which I was still lying, wondering what this strange visit could mean; and there he stood gazing at me for a minute, at least, without uttering a syllable. Suddenly, however, he protruded a spare skinny hand from the cloak in which it had hitherto been enveloped, and pointed with a short staff, tipped with metal, in the direction of my face, as if he were commencing an exorcism. He appeared to be about to speak, but his words, if he intended any, were stifled in their birth by a sudden sternutation which escaped him, and which was so violent that the hostess started back, exclaiming, "Ave Maria purissima!" and nearly dropped the lamp in her alarm.

"My good person," said I, "what do you mean by this foolish hobgoblinry? If you have anything to communicate do so at once, and go about your business. I am unwell, and you are depriving me of my repose."

"By the virtue of this staff," said the old man, "and the authority which it gives me to do and say that which is convenient, I do command, order, and summon you to appear to-morrow, at the eleventh hour, at the office of my lord the corregidor of this village of Madrid, in order that, standing before him humbly, and with befitting reverence, you may listen to whatever he may have to say, or, if necessary, may yield yourself up to receive the castigation of any crimes which you may have committed, whether trivial or enormous. Venez, compère," he added, in most villainous French, "voilà mon affaire; voilà ce que je viens vous dire."



Thereupon he glared at me for a moment, nodded his head twice, and, replacing his staff beneath his cloak, shambled out of the room, and with a valedictory sneeze in the passage left the house.

GEORGE BORROW'S *The Bible in Spain*.

**29. See your story first and write what you see.**

Vague recollections make dull reading. Trying to make others see what one doesn't see one's self makes insincere reading. Before you can tell a story that will be real to others it must be a series of real pictures to you. You must see the place where it happened and the looks and motions of the persons concerned in it. If you fail to do this, even a true story may not seem true. If you do this well, an impossible story may seem very true indeed.

**30. To describe anything is to mention the details by which we should naturally recognize it. Describe only those things that help on your story.**

In describing a horse, it is seldom necessary to tell us that he had four legs. Such facts may be taken for granted. But mention the peculiarities of the horse. In describing a man, mention only his distinguishing characteristics. Never drag anything in for the mere sake of description. In the following introduction to a story every detail is one that would strike a spectator, intent on what was going to happen next. After reading it through, tell which details are made particularly interesting and real.

One morning I set out, designing to pay a visit to my brother, at the place where he was detached; the distance was rather considerable, yet I hoped to be back by evening fall, for I was now a shrewd walker, thanks to constant practice. I set out early, and, directing my course towards the north, I had in less than two hours accomplished considerably more than half of the journey. The weather had at first been propitious: a slight frost had rendered the ground firm to the tread, and the skies were clear; but now a change came over the scene, the skies darkened, and a heavy snow-storm came on; the road then lay straight through a bog, and was bounded by a deep trench on both sides; I was making the best of my way, keeping as nearly as I could in the middle of the road, lest, blinded by the snow which was frequently borne into my eyes by the wind, I might fall into the dyke, when all at once I heard a shout to windward, and turning my eyes I saw the figure of a man, and what appeared to be an animal of some kind, coming across the bog with great speed, in the direction of myself; the nature of the ground seemed to offer but little impediment to these beings, both clearing the holes and abysses which lay in their way with surprising agility; the animal was, however, some slight way in advance, and, bounding over the dyke, appeared on the road just before me. It was a dog, of what species I cannot tell, never having seen the like before or since; the head was large and round; the ears so tiny as scarcely to be discernible; the eyes of a fiery red; in size it was rather small than large; and the coat, which was remarkably smooth, as white as the falling flakes. It placed itself directly in my path, and showing its teeth, and bristling its coat, appeared determined to prevent my progress. I had an ashen stick in my hand, with which I threatened it; this, however, only served to increase its fury; it rushed upon me, and I had the utmost difficulty to preserve myself from its fangs.

“What are you doing with the dog, the fairy dog?” said a man who at this time likewise cleared the dyke at a bound.

He was a very tall man, rather well dressed as it should

seem; his garments, however, were like my own, so covered with snow that I could scarcely discern their quality.

"What are ye doing with the dog of peace?"

"I wish he would show himself one," said I; "I said nothing to him, but he placed himself in my road, and would not let me pass."

"Of course he would not be letting you till he knew where ye were going."

"He's not much of a fairy," said I, "or he would know that without asking; tell him that I am going to see my brother."

"And who is your brother, little sas?"

"What my father is, a royal soldier."

"Oh, ye are going then to the detachment at . . .; by my shoul I have a good mind to be spoiling your journey."

"You are doing that already," said I, "keeping me here talking about dogs and fairies; you had better go home and get some salve to cure that place over your eye; it's catching cold you'll be, in so much snow."

On one side of the man's forehead there was a raw and staring wound, as if from a recent and terrible blow.

"Faith, then, I'll be going, but it's taking you wid me I will be."

GEORGE BORROW'S *Lavengro*.

### 31. Exercise.

In the following story show how the writer has made the account clear, interesting, and vivid by selection of details.

September was unusually warm that year, and the hope that a "cool spell" might be provided for the last day of my journey from St. Louis to Los Angeles was not fulfilled.

We left El Paso over the Southern Pacific Railroad one afternoon, and by the next morning we were well on our way across Arizona, where the sandy prairie stretched for

miles, unbroken by any vegetation, except the sage-brush. The sun rose, a red ball which burned its way higher and higher into the cloudless sky, as we sped on through the barren waste, relieved now and then by a forlorn little Mexican town with its adobe houses, and crooked streets.

The heat increased rapidly. The car windows were closed tightly to keep out the fine alkali dust, which even then sifted in at every crevice and added to the discomfort of the passengers. The electric fan whirled, and churned the stifling air in the car, without affording much relief. By ten o'clock the occupants of the car began to assume a *négligée* appearance. The men discarded coats and collars, and some of the women, who had made the journey before and knew what to expect, retired to the dressing-room and reappeared in loose dressing sacks. Others sat up very straight in starched shirt waists and tried to look proper, while their collars gradually wilted into wet strings about their necks. As the morning wore on the sick baby across the aisle grew more and more restless, and moaned "Agua, agua!" \* almost unceasingly.

By one o'clock few felt like availing themselves of the opportunity offered by the railroad eating house to dispose of a steaming hot dinner in twenty minutes; and the porter, in his white suit, was kept busy with orders for iced drinks of various compositions, and iced fruit and wafers.

Soon the lowest part of the desert was reached, a point below the level of the sea where a salt formation whitened the surface of the earth, above which the heated air seemed to throb and pulsate. The heat grew more and more intense. A young girl, who had been traveling for four days, fainted from exhaustion, and the rest of us forgot our own discomfort for awhile in ministering to her. Then the experienced ladies in the dressing sacks told us that the worst would soon be over, for we were climbing the ascent toward the top of the divide, and the cool breeze from the sea would soon bring us relief. It was nearly sunset, however, when the porter began dusting out the window sills, preparatory to letting in the fresh air blown to us from the old Pacific.

\* Water.

How we leaned out of the windows to catch the breath from Heaven! How our aching eyes sought the green of the trees as we left the desert and came into the gardens of California!

The sick baby fell into a quiet sleep; the drooping spirits of all the passengers revived; the attire of polite society was resumed; and we entered Los Angeles with grateful hearts that the horrors of the day were passed.

**32. Even in a quiet story, keep your reader's curiosity always alive.**

So introduce each detail that the reader will be led to wonder what is to happen next. The last sentence should satisfy his curiosity. If all his curiosity is satisfied before then, he will never finish what you have to say. The following is an introduction of a story. The writer keeps us looking forward to see how matters will turn out.

Old Miss Porley put on her silk shawl, and arranged it carefully over her thin shoulders, and pinned it with a hand that shook a little as if she were much excited. She bent forward to examine the shawl in the mahogany-framed mirror, for there was a frayed and tender spot in the silk where she had pinned it so many years. The shawl was very old; it had been her mother's, and she disliked to wear it too often, but she never could make up her mind to go out into the street in summer, as some of her neighbors did, with nothing over her shoulders at all. Next she put on her bonnet and tried to set it straight, allowing for a wave in the looking-glass that made one side of her face appear much longer than the other; then she drew on a pair of well-darned silk gloves; one had a wide crack all the way up the back of the hand, but they were still neat and decent for every-day wear, if she were careful to keep her left hand under the edge of the shawl. She had discussed the

propriety of drawing the raveled silk together, but a thick seam would look very ugly, and there was something accidental about the crack.

Then, after hesitating a few moments, she took a small piece of folded white letter-paper from the table and went out of the house, locking the door and trying it, and stepped away bravely down the village street.

SARAH ORNE JEWETT: *A Native of Winby, and Other Stories.*

### 33. Write in character.

No two persons standing at the same spot or walking along the same path will see things in quite the same way. London, for instance, is not the same to the man who has spent his years driving a 'bus that it is to a man who has lived behind a glove counter all his life. Both may be very alert in a London street, but they will observe different things. To the 'bus driver, the street will be horses, vehicles, and people in motion. To the glove clerk it will be people in costumes, drivers in livery, horses in harness. To the 'bus driver every private carriage on the street is a vehicle; to the glove clerk it is an equipage. The more interested a man is in what goes on about him, the more special will be his point of view. Each subject you write about is your subject; have your own way of looking at it. The way you look at it will give point to your theme. The following narrative is interesting because the writer has a mind of her own and speaks it.

The trip from Brussels to Waterloo is, as a rule, made in large stage-coaches drawn by four horses. On one of these

we found ourselves one bright autumn morning. There were four of us, and as we were not old people, who generally occupy the inside of the stage, we climbed on top, ready for anything which might come up.

The drive out was rather monotonous, even though we had never been in that part of the country before, but when we finally arrived in Waterloo we began to wake up. The first thing we saw was a hotel in which was a museum. Into this we marched and, after making our way upstairs through a dark passage, we saw a good many so-called relics of the battle. There was the chair in which Wellington was supposed to have sat when he wrote his despatches. There was also a bed in which somebody slept, and another one in which somebody else died. The articles certainly looked old enough to have been used at the time of the battle, but there were so many other relics that I doubt whether any of them were real. For instance, there were hosts of cannon balls marked "Prussian," "French," and "English," though I don't quite see how they know the difference.

The admission to this place was free, but on going downstairs we were accosted by a small boy, who informed us that we could not leave the building until we had given him something. As he did not ask for any special amount I suppose he thought we were "green" enough to give him something. I must confess that we were.

From here we went into another museum at the foot of the Lion Monument, which overlooks the battle-field. In this museum was a collection of swords and other arms, along with spurs, among which was a pair supposed to have belonged to Napoleon.

Then we went to the top of the monument, where we could see the field and the surrounding country with the spires of Brussels rising in the distance.

The lion on this monument seems to be standing guard over the field and village, and for this reason ought to be respected. But the audacious birds did not seem to take this view of the case, but had built their nests right in the venerable lion's mouth and ears, where they seemed to think

they were safe, as indeed they were, out of everybody's reach.

The drive home was far more amusing than the one out had been. Some children, evidently thinking they might get something from us, ran along the road with the coach and cut up all sorts of capers for our benefit. They stood on their heads and waved their heels about in time to some imaginary music, and then righting themselves they came and begged for whatever they could get and even climbed on the back of the coach. If some one said that he had not got anything when he really had, the rest flatly contradicted him and a lively scrimmage in the dust followed.

These youngsters kept us company until we reached the city. Then some ran home, others turned to follow some other coach or wagon, while we, after a pleasant day, went home to supper.

R. H.

#### 34. Exercise.

The following is supposed to be written by a cook's boy on a man-of-war off the Italian coast, two hundred and more years ago. And it is written much as a cook's boy would write. Finish the story so as to get the boy after some difficulty back safely to his ship. Write in the first person and, as far as possible, the manner in which the boy has told the first part.

Returning to Port Maina, we lay'd in Provision of Quailes, Pickl'd up and Barrell'd like Anchovies, which is a great Trade in that Country, where, tho' I thought myself Sharp enough to have dealt with the Devil, they Cheated me as cleverly, as if I had been a Naked Indian. My Master gave me half a Dozen Pieces of Eight, and order'd me Ashore to get some fresh Provisions. I did so, and found abundance of Country Fellows by the Town, with every one a Sheep, and as much Cunning as a Crocodile. I thought it better to Buy one of them, being close by the



Galleys, than to go a Mile to the Town, and have the Trouble of bringing it so far; and accordingly coming up to one of the Peasants, Bargain'd with him to give a Piece of Eight for his Sheep, which I thought a Choice one. The Sharper took my Money with his Right-hand, and made show with the Left as if he would have deliver'd me the Horned Beast, which when I went to lay hold of, he let go, and away the Wild Devil ran Skipping and Bouncing towards the Town. The Cheating Seller whipt after it, like an Arrow out of a Bow, pretending to catch it, and I made after him as Nimbly to retrieve my Piece of Eight. The Sheep scour'd, the Owner ran, and I flew with such Swiftmess, that I overtook him in a thick Wood, that was about half way from the Port to the Town. I ask'd for my Sheep, he answer'd, He was run into the Thicket, and he could not find him; Then I demanded my Money, to which he reply'd, That a Bargain was a Bargain; and the Loss must lie where it lighted; for he had done his Part in delivering the Beast, and it was my Part to take fast hold, and secure it. The Knavery of the Clown put me into such a Passion, that feeling him alone, and Un-arm'd, I had the Courage to draw a little Rusty Sword I had brought from Aboard, thinking to fright him, and so get my Money again; but I was quite out in my Measures, for as soon as the Bumpkin saw my Harmless Weapon Naked, he began to Cry out most Unmercifully, Help, Help, Murder, Thieves. At the first Noise there Rush'd a Gang of Rustick Savages out of the Thickest of the Wood: the Lord of his Mercy deliver all Good People from such a Rabble Rout. They were all Arm'd with Bills and Firelocks, and had hemm'd me in before I saw any of them; so that I was fallen into the Hands of a Country Mob, which is the greatest of all Misfortunes that can possibly befall Man. One of them, who seem'd to be the Head Knave amongst the rest, came up and ask'd my Innocent Judas, What it was that made him cry out so bitterly? Who answer'd, That he having Sold me a Sheep, and receiv'd a Piece of Eight for it, I follow'd him to take away the Money again; and that overtaking him in that Place, I

demanded it with abundance of Threats and high Words, and had drawn my Sword to Rob and Murder him, because he refus'd to part with it. They, like a parcel of Scoundrels as they were, would not hear anything I could offer in my own Defence.

### 35. Exercise.

Relate in writing a personal experience that will fit one of the following titles:

My First Experience with an Automobile.

Wet to the Skin.

My Experience as a Handicraftsman.

In a Blizzard.

A Mountain Climb.

A Difficult Errand.

It was the Animal's Fault.

### 36. Exercise.

Write the following story as if you were the thief relating it as a personal experience. Put yourself in his place. Give us the same impression of the adventure that such a mean-spirited rascal would have. Use the first person. Drop out everything which would not come to his attention or occur to his mind. Invent enough from his point of view to make the story complete. Introduce each fact where he would observe it or naturally think of it. Of course, no human eye could successfully replace the eye of the portrait. Use all your skill to make the reader forget that in this respect the story is really impossible.

My aunt was a lady of large frame, strong mind, and great resolution; she was what might be termed a very

manly woman. My uncle was a thin, puny little man, very meek and acquiescent, and no match for my aunt. It was observed that he dwindled and dwindled gradually away, from the day of his marriage. His wife's powerful mind was too much for him; it wore him out. My aunt, however, took all possible care of him; had half the doctors in town to prescribe for him; made him take all their prescriptions, and dosed him with physic enough to cure a whole hospital. All was in vain. My uncle grew worse and worse the more dosing and nursing he underwent, until in the end he added another to the long list of matrimonial victims who have been killed with kindness.

"And was it his ghost that appeared to her?" asked the inquisitive gentleman, who had questioned the former storyteller.

"You shall hear," replied the narrator.—My aunt took on mightily for the death of her poor dear husband. Perhaps she felt some compunction at having given him so much physic, and nursed him into the grave. At any rate, she did all that a widow could do to honor his memory. She spared no expense in either the quantity or quality of her mourning weeds; wore a miniature of him about her neck as large as a little sun-dial, and had a full-length portrait of him always hanging in her bed-chamber. All the world extolled her conduct to the skies; and it was determined that a woman who behaved so well to the memory of one husband deserved soon to get another.

It was not long after this that she went to take up her residence in an old country-seat in Derbyshire, which had long been in the care of merely a steward and housekeeper. She took most of her servants with her, intending to make it her principal abode. The house stood in a lonely wild part of the country, among the gray Derbyshire hills, with a murderer hanging in chains on a bleak height in full view.

The servants from town were half frightened out of their wits at the idea of living in such a dismal, pagan-looking place; especially when they got together in the servants' hall in the evening, and compared notes on all

the hobgoblin stories picked up in the course of the day. They were afraid to venture alone about the gloomy, black-looking chambers. My lady's maid, who was troubled with nerves, declared she could never sleep alone in such a "ghastly rummaging old building"; and the footman, who was a kind-hearted young fellow, did all in his power to cheer her up.

My aunt was struck with the lonely appearance of the house. Before going to bed, therefore, she examined well the fastnesses of the doors and windows; locked up the plate with her own hands, and carried the keys, together with a little box of money and jewels, to her own room; for she was a notable woman, and always saw to all things herself. Having put the keys under her pillow, and dismissed her maid, she sat by her toilet, arranging her hair; for being, in spite of her grief for my uncle, rather a buxom widow, she was somewhat particular about her person. She sat for a little while looking at her face in the glass, first on one side, then on the other, as ladies are apt to do when they would ascertain whether they have been in good looks; for a roistering country squire of the neighborhood, with whom she had flirted when a girl, had called that day to welcome her to the country.

All of a sudden she thought she heard something move behind her. She looked hastily round, but there was nothing to be seen. Nothing but the grimly painted portrait of her poor dear man, hanging against the wall.

She gave a heavy sigh to his memory, as she was accustomed to do whenever she spoke of him in company, and then went on adjusting her night-dress, and thinking of the squire. Her sigh was re-echoed, or answered, by a long-drawn breath. She looked round again, but no one was to be seen. She ascribed these sounds to the wind oozing through the rat-holes of the old mansion, and proceeded leisurely to put her hair in papers, when, all at once, she thought she perceived one of the eyes of the portrait move.

"The back of her head being towards it!" said the story-teller with the ruined head,— "good!"

"Yes, sir!" replied dryly the narrator, "her back being towards the portrait, but her eyes fixed on its reflection in the glass."—Well, as I was saying, she perceived one of the eyes of the portrait move. So strange a circumstance, as you may well suppose, gave her a sudden shock. To assure herself of the fact, she put one hand to her forehead as if rubbing it; peeped through her fingers, and moved the candle with the other hand. The light of the taper gleamed on the eye, and was reflected from it. She was sure it moved. Nay, more, it seemed to give her a wink, as she had sometimes known her husband to do when living! It struck a momentary chill to her heart; for she was a lone woman, and felt herself fearfully situated.

The chill was but transient. My aunt, who was almost as resolute a personage as your uncle, sir, (turning to the old story-teller), became instantly calm and collected. She went on adjusting her dress. She even hummed an air, and did not make even a single false note. She casually overturned a dressing-box; took a candle and picked up the articles one by one from the floor; pursued a rolling pin-cushion that was making the best of its way under the bed; then opened the door; looked for an instant into the corridor, as if in doubt whether to go; and then walked quietly out.

She hastened downstairs, ordered the servants to arm themselves with the weapons first at hand, placed herself at their head, and returned almost immediately.

Her hastily levied army presented a formidable force. The steward had a rusty blunderbuss, the coachman a loaded whip, the footman a pair of horse-pistols, the cook a huge chopping-knife, and the butler a bottle in each hand. My aunt led the van with a red-hot poker, and in my opinion she was the most formidable of the party. The waiting-maid, who dreaded to stay alone in the servants' hall, brought up the rear, smelling to a broken bottle of volatile salts, and expressing her terror of the ghostesses. "Ghosts!" said my aunt, resolutely. "I'll singe their whiskers for them!"

They entered the chamber. All was still and undis-

turbed as when she had left it. They approached the portrait of my uncle.

"Pull down that picture!" cried my aunt. A heavy groan, and a sound like the chattering of teeth, issued from the portrait. The servants shrunk back; the maid uttered a faint shriek, and clung to the footman for support.

"Instantly!" added my aunt, with a stamp of the foot.

The picture was pulled down, and from a recess behind it, in which had formerly stood a clock, they hauled forth a round-shouldered, black-bearded varlet, with a knife as long as my arm, but trembling all over like an aspen-leaf.

"Well, and who was he? No ghost, I suppose," said the inquisitive gentleman.

"A Knight of the post,"<sup>1</sup> replied the narrator, "who had been smitten with the worth of the wealthy widow; or rather a marauding Tarquin, who had stolen into her chamber to violate her purse, and rifle her strong box, when all the house should be asleep. In plain terms," continued he, "the vagabond was a loose fellow of the neighborhood, who had once been a servant in the house, and had been employed to assist in arranging it for the reception of its mistress. He confessed that he had contrived this hiding-place for his nefarious purpose, and had borrowed an eye from the portrait by way of a reconnoitring-hole."

"And what did they do with him?—did they hang him?" resumed the questioner.

"Hang him!—how could they?" exclaimed a beetle-browed barrister, with a hawk's nose. "The offence was not capital. No robbery, no assault had been committed. No forcible entry or breaking into the premises——"

"My aunt," said the narrator, "was a woman of spirit, and apt to take the law in her own hands. She had her own notions of cleanliness also. She ordered the fellow to be drawn through the horse-pond, to cleanse away all

<sup>1</sup> That is, a highwayman, or, loosely speaking, a rogue.

offences, and then to be well rubbed down with an oaken towel."

"And what became of him afterwards?" said the inquisitive gentleman.

"I do not exactly know. I believe he was sent on a voyage of improvement to Botany Bay."

From IRVING'S *Tales of a Traveller*.

### 37. Exercise.

Relate in writing a personal experience that will fit one of the following titles:

From the Raw Material to the Finished Product.

The Doctor was Called In.

How I Won the Race.

How I Lost the Race.

A Family Caller.

A Practical Joke.

A Christmas Experience.

One Fourth of July.

### 38. Why we paragraph.

Select a story that is full of action, and divide it into scenes, as if you intended to dramatize it. In doing this work, bear in mind (1) that the series of scenes if acted out should be enough and of the right kind to give the story clearly, (2) that there should be no unnecessary scenes, (3) that in each scene the curtain should rise on an intelligible situation and fall on a striking and significant stage group or spectacle. To accomplish all this you should feel free to alter the arrangement of the original. A very good story for the purpose is Irving's tale of the "Belated Travellers" in the *Tales of a Traveller*.

We can never plan anything—whether a serious undertaking or a pleasure—without thinking of it as composed of parts. It we have a fishing excursion in mind, for instance, we may find that our plan will consist of four divisions: First, how the bait and luncheon shall be got; second, how we shall get to the fishing grounds; third, how long and in what manner we shall fish there; fourth, when and how we shall get home. If a boy at school seriously plans to be a doctor, he will see his future divided into (1) School life, (2) College life, (3) Medical School life, (4) Hospital Experience, (5) Getting a Start in Medical Practice. He divides his future into distinct parts.

In the same way when we try to recall an experience like the fishing excursion, we naturally divide it into parts. The first part of the story will be one situation; we can close the door on that and take up the second part of the story as a second situation, and so on until we finish the experience. Every well-told story of any length is divided in this way.

In telling a story to some one else you can make it more easy and more interesting for him to follow, if you show him very clearly where one part closes and another begins. We can all see how true this is in the matter of plays. To sit for three hours through a play not broken into acts and scenes would be tedious. No matter how interesting the story that is being played on the stage, we are never sorry when the curtain falls on a scene. A paragraph is to a short story what a scene is to a play. It should open by letting us know what the story is about. It should close at an interesting moment. When we reach the



end of a paragraph we like to recognize that we have watched a definite part of the story through, have come to a pleasant break, and are ready for the next paragraph.

### 39. A study in paragraphing.

In the following story the paragraphs are distinctly and very sensibly marked off. Rewrite the story, increasing it to at least twice its present length.

It was nearly sunset when we reached the mountain top. We immediately started to make a camp for the night, while the cook was preparing supper. He built a fire, put a kettle of sausages on to boil, and then looked around for the coffee. The coffee and coffee-pot were missing. A council was held and it was decided that they must have been left at the bottom of the mountain, where we had stopped for a while before beginning the climb. We drew lots to see who should go back and get them, and I was the unfortunate on whom the duty fell.

When I started on my walk it was already getting dark, so I took a lantern with me. I reached the foot of the mountain without much difficulty and found the coffee and the pot where I had expected them to be; then I started to return.

It was hard climbing, especially in the night with only the light of a small lantern. I had gone less than half-way back when the flame began to flicker and grow dim. Soon it went out, leaving me in absolute darkness, for the moon was not yet up. The path up the mountain was very faint and was hard to follow even with the light, and without the light it was impossible to follow it. I was soon off the path and wandering in the dense woods. I thought that if I kept on going up I must reach the top, so I kept my course as straight up as possible.

Every few minutes I called and then listened for an answer from the campers on the mountain top. At last I

heard a far-off call, and hurrying on I soon reached the camp, exhausted.

#### 40. Exercise.

Write a theme on one of the following subjects, taking special pains to make distinct and effective paragraphs.

A Day of Fishing.

How My Next-Door Neighbors Spend a Day.

Following a Fire Engine.

My First Day in Camp.

A Day Abroad.

How I Write a Theme.

A Clever Scheme and How It Fell Through.

A Ride in an Automobile.

#### 41. Exercise.

The following extract is a humorous treatment of the sporting tastes of the people of a little French town. Treat in a similar way the habits of some place or circle of people that you know.

For five leagues round about Tarascon the burrows are empty, the nests abandoned; not a blackbird, not a quail, not the smallest rabbit, not the tiniest white-tail! In short, as for game, there now remains in the country only one old rascal of a hare, who has escaped, as if by miracle, the Tarasconian September massacres, and persists in living there. At Tarascon this hare is very well known. They have given him a name: he is called the Express. It is known that he has his abode on the land of M. Bompard,—which, by the way, has doubled and even trebled the price of this land,—but they have not yet been able to catch him.

At the present moment there are only two or three desperate fellows in deadly pursuit of him. The rest have

buried the hatchet, and the Express has long since passed into a local superstition, even though the Tarasconian is but little superstitious by nature.

"Well, then," you will say, "since game is so scarce at Tarascon, what do the Tarasconians hunt?"

Why, bless me! They go off into the open country, two or three leagues from the town. They assemble in groups of five or six; stretch out quietly in the shade of a well, an old wall, or an olive-tree; take from their game-bags a good slice of stewed beef, raw onions, a sausage, and anchovies; and begin an interminable lunch, washed down with one of those pleasant Rhone wines which excite mirth and song.

After this, when they are well ballasted, they get up, whistle to the dogs, load the guns, and begin the hunt: that is to say, each of these gentlemen takes his cap, throws it into the air with all his might, and shoots it on the wing with number five, six, or two, according to agreement. He who shoots his cap oftenest is proclaimed king of the hunt, and enters Tarascon triumphantly in the evening, with the riddled cap on the end of his gun, in the midst of barking and fanfares.

It is needless to tell you that there is a brisk trade in hunting-caps in the town. There are even hatters who sell caps already riddled and ragged, for the use of the unskilful; but scarcely any one but Bezuquet the apothecary is known to buy them. It is dishonorable!

As cap-hunter, Tartarin of Tarascon had no equal. Every Sunday morning he would set out with a new cap, every Sunday evening come back with a rag. In his little house, the garrets were full of these glorious trophies. So all the Tarasconians recognized him as their master; and, since Tartarin was thoroughly familiar with the hunting-code, and had read all the treatises and all the manuals on every possible kind of hunting, from cap-hunting to tiger-hunting in Burmah, these gentlemen had made him their Chief Justice Cynegtic, and took him for umpire in all their discussions.

ALPHONSE DAUDET: *Tartarin of Tarascon.*

## CHAPTER III

### HOW TO EXPLAIN

#### 42. Introductory.

We are often called upon to explain matters we are supposed to know. At one time we are asked to direct a stranger on the street; at another time to show a friend how to play some game; at still another, to tell what a story we are reading is about; at another to recite a lesson. Ability to explain simply, clearly, and in a way to be remembered becomes more valuable the older we grow.

The first difficulty we are likely to meet with when we are asked for an explanation is our own ignorance. We have, perhaps, always supposed we knew the subject; at least our knowledge has been enough so that we can get along without inconvenience; but when we are asked to say what we know, we find that it is very little and very vague.

But if we know our subject we are often met with a very different difficulty. We find it hard to imagine how any one can be ignorant of it, or we wonder what the extent of that ignorance is. Total inability to understand it and indifference about it are the marks of a natural boor. If you ask him a civil question he will only laugh or answer in a surly word or two. The ability to appreciate ignorance, sympathize with

it, and be of service to it is a mark of the trained gentleman.

The third difficulty we meet with is the difficulty of arranging our explanation in a clear and orderly way. Often we are troubled to know what to say first, what second, what third. We don't know where to begin.

If we have a chance to write our explanation, our recognition of these three difficulties will help us a long way toward overcoming them. For we have prepared ourselves to study our subject thoroughly, to put ourselves into sympathy with our readers, and to arrange and rearrange our facts until we get them into a clear and reasonable order.

#### **43. Exercise.**

Write a theme to explain one of the following subjects:

How to Lay Out a Football Field.

A Fire Drill in School.

How to Pitch a Tent.

How a Fallen Horse is Got Up from the Pavement.

How to Make a School Flag.

How to Take a Kodak Picture.

How to Start a School Paper.

How to Make a Kite.

How a Blast Furnace is Run.

- 44. Recall the time when you were ignorant of this very subject you have chosen to explain. Think of your reader as being in the same state of ignorance to-day.**

The first quality a clear writer must have is

patience. He has undertaken to explain something to people who know less about it than he does. He must be very simple; he must be thorough enough to give all the necessary facts; and he must begin with something that his readers will understand and then go by clear steps from one point to another until his task is finished. Some writers are in such a hurry to say what is on their minds, that they never stop to think of the reader's state of mind at all. If a writer is to be clear he must never forget that the reader is ignorant, is anxious to learn, can be easily confused, and is trying to follow him.

**45. Plan your explanation carefully; arrange it in the clearest way for your reader to follow.**

Making a plan is three-quarters of the work of making an explanation. Even a poor plan is better than none, provided you have made it carefully and your reader can see that you have one in your mind. That very fact will save him from a great deal of confusion. But it is impossible to get really good results unless one's plan is clear and sensible. For this reason any one who would form the habit of explaining himself clearly must keep his common sense constantly in training. There are three rules which such a writer must always follow. He must be patient; he must use his intelligence; he must arrange his scheme in the way that he thinks will be clearest to his readers. The following selection illustrates well planned and clear explanation.

A complete knowledge of the steam-engine involves an acquaintance with the sciences of physics, of chemistry,

and of pure and applied mathematics, as well as with the theory of mechanism and the strength of materials. My plan, however, is to begin by showing in a very simple case how steam can do work, and then to explain an actual engine of the most modern construction, but at the same time remarkably free from complexity. Take a hollow cylinder, the bottom closed while the top remains open, and pour in water to the height of a few inches. Next cover the water with a flat plate or piston which fits the interior of the cylinder perfectly; then apply heat to the water, and we shall witness the following phenomena. After the lapse of some minutes the water will begin to boil, and the steam accumulating at the upper surface will make room for itself by raising the piston slightly. As the boiling continues, more and more steam will be formed, and raise the piston higher and higher, till all the water is boiled away, and nothing but steam is left in the cylinder. Now this machine, consisting of cylinder, piston, water, and fire, is the steam-engine in its most elementary form. For a steam-engine may be defined as an apparatus for doing work by means of heat applied to water; and since raising such a weight as the piston is a form of doing work, this apparatus, clumsy and inconvenient though it may be, answers the definition precisely.

GEORGE C. V. HOLMES: *The Steam-Engine* (in Hammond Lamont's *Specimens of Exposition*. Henry Holt & Company).

**46. Begin with the sentence which will best prepare the reader to understand the rest of the theme.**

Your reader is your partner. You are anxious to have him understand you. He is just as anxious that you should make yourself understood. It is of great importance to both of you that from the start he should know clearly what you are about. Begin then with a sentence which will let him into this secret. If

for instance you are giving directions for laying out a football field you might begin by stating the dimensions and nature of the ground required. The reader will then understand what is the object of the suggestions which follow. If you are describing a fire-drill, you might begin by explaining its purpose. This will help the reader to understand why the fire-bell rings and the reason for each action of the teacher and the pupils as it occurs. If you are telling how to pitch a tent, you might begin by mentioning the three things involved, the tent, the pole, and the pegs. By recognizing that you have to deal with these three objects he will be able better to understand each of your actions when it comes. For illustration see pages 64-65.

**47. When a chronological order can be used it is usually the clearest.**

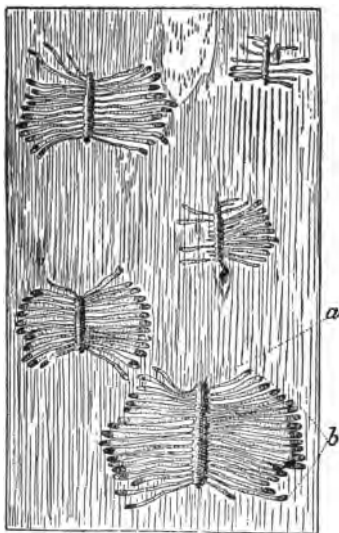
All the subjects assigned in section 43 can be treated chronologically. That is, after the opening sentence has been written, we can put the facts in the order of time in which they occur. We can begin the laying out of the football field with the first thing to be done, then state the second, then the third, etc. The second sentence on fire-drill can describe the fire-alarm. Then we can describe each action as it occurs, until the pupils are back in their seats and the drill is over.

Trace the chronological order in the following account.

The hickory bark-beetle is a short, stout, shining black or reddish-brown beetle, averaging 3.6 millimeters (0.14 inch)



in length. The wing covers are short and project over the abdomen, which in the males is excavated beneath and armed with four rather prominent spines, which suggest its technical name. It appears on the wing from May to August and begins its attack on the living trees at the base of the buds and leaves, apparently for the purpose



Work of the hickory bark-beetle on the surface of wood beneath the bark; *a*, primary gallery; *b*, larval mines. (Original.)

of obtaining food; later it enters the bark of the larger branches and top of the trunk and excavates short longitudinal burrows (fig. 27, *a*) in the inner bark and surface of the wood. The eggs, which are placed along the sides of this primary gallery, hatch into small white grubs, or larvæ, which burrow at right angles through the inner bark and groove the surface of the wood. The broods of larvæ pass the winter in these brood galleries, and the transformation to the adult takes place in the spring in

the outer portion of the inner bark. The adults emerge through holes in the outer bark to continue their depredations on the buds and branches of other trees and the remainder of the trunks that were not killed by the first attack. They commence to emerge about the middle of May in the latitude of Morgantown, W. Va., and two or three weeks later in the latitude of Detroit, Mich. Individuals of the hibernating brood continue to emerge until August, and may be found excavating galleries and depositing eggs as late as September. Thus they will be found attacking trees all through the summer, and all stages, from very young to matured larvæ, will be found in the bark at the commencement of winter. In the States north of Tennessee and North Carolina there is evidently but one generation, while farther south there may be two.

A. D. HOPKINS: "Insect Injuries to Hardwood Forest Trees" (in the *Yearbook of the Department of Agriculture*, 1903).

#### 48. Omit none of the essential facts.

Lazy writers like to think that a great many details of their subject will be known to everybody anyway, and so need not be explained or even mentioned. As an actual fact, however, the only excuse for writing an explanation at all is the supposition that the reader does not understand the subject. Many of the details he has probably never known; others he has known but has forgotten; still others he may not have forgotten, but may neglect to think of at the proper moment unless they are called to his attention. In one way or another the reader must be reminded of all the necessary facts.

Yesterday I walked to Barden Tower to find some *Simulium* Larvæ. These little black creatures, from one-eighth to half an inch long, cluster on leaves of water-cress and

brookline in a clear and rapid stream, which flows down from the moors to the Wharfe. The manœuvres of this larva have been a favourite study of mine. I have watched it clinging to smooth leaves or stones, in spite of the full force of a mountain current. It keeps its hold by means of a sucker armed with a circle of hooks at the tail-end of its body, or by a somewhat similar sucker just behind the head. If compelled to let go by threatening danger, it disappears from view in a moment, but the attentive observer can by and by see it wavering in the clear torrent, and then slowly travelling back, not by swimming, but by hauling itself in along a thread, one of a number of threads which are stretched from leaf to leaf like those of a spider.

J. J. MIALl: *Round the Year* (The Macmillan Company).

#### 49. Keep to the point.

It is the one business of the person who explains to explain. He should not interrupt his work simply for the sake of introducing something picturesque or funny. A good explanation may be full of interest, picturesqueness, and humor, but it must keep to the point. Not everything which can be thought of in connection with a subject belongs to it. Put in only those facts which are useful in making your theme as clear as possible; omit the rest. Examine the selections that have been given above. They keep carefully to the point.

#### 50. The point of view in explanation.

A complete explanation for certain purposes may be no explanation at all for other purposes. This is best shown by an illustration.

A traveller, very anxious to reach his destination on time, finds that his train has been brought to a sudden stop. He peers out of the window to see what is the matter, then goes forward to make inquiries. He finds that a heavy joist is lying across the track. If his mind is absorbed in his own business and his need of getting to it, he will be satisfied; he has learned why the train stopped and when it will go on again. This is all he wished to know and the explanation is complete. If he is of a curious disposition, however, he will wish to know more. How did the joist get on the track? Was it put there maliciously or did it fall from some flat car without being noticed? No explanation will be complete which does not answer these questions. If he has a personal interest in the management of the road, even the answer to these questions will not satisfy him completely. If the joist has been placed maliciously on the track, he will wish to know who the culprits are who left it there. If it has fallen off a flat car, he will wish to know what are the defects in the management of trains which permit a joist to fall off unnoticed.

Or we may take another illustration. When a boy is asked to explain what a buckwheat cake is, he explains what it looks like, what it tastes like, what is eaten on it. When a cook is asked the same question, she explains how it is made. If a foreigner travelling in the United States were to write about the same subject, he might tell all that the boy and the cook would tell, but he would say more; he would explain in what portions of the country the buckwheat cake is popular,

and what peculiar tastes and habits of the Americans make it a favorite dish with them.

Before beginning to explain a subject, a writer should know why he wishes to explain it and why his reader wishes it explained. Let us imagine that some morning, unexpectedly, we meet Benjamin Franklin in the streets of New York. He has just returned to life after a sleep of one hundred and more years (he died in 1790), so that he has been awake not more than fifteen minutes. We shall find that there are a number of things which he will wish to understand. Some of these things he will wish to have explained so that he can make use of his knowledge immediately. He will like to know where he is, for instance; he will like to know where he can get something to eat; he will like to understand modern ways of getting about the city, so that he can find his way. Other things such as street lamps and electric light signs, he will like to have explained to him, not so that he can use them, for this he can do without explanation, but because of his interest in the mechanical skill and the scientific knowledge shown in them. Still other things such as slot machines, delicatessen shops, hokey-pokey carts, and Italian peanut-stands he will probably be chiefly interested in because they show the great changes in the population and the tastes of our cities since his day.

#### 51. Exercise.

Write two themes of a paragraph each. For this purpose select any one of the following subjects and treat it *from the two points of view* mentioned.

1. The cat as an enemy of the dog.  
The cat as a pet.
2. How hockey brings out the character of different boys.  
Hockey as a game of skill.
3. The Zoological Gardens as a collection of people.  
The Zoological Gardens as a collection of animals.
4. How to make a book-case.  
Making a book-case as a pleasant way of spending the time.
5. Athletics as a way of increasing school spirit.  
Athletics as hard work.
6. My street as a place of interest.  
How my street could be improved.

Some of the above paragraphs can be treated chronologically. For the others the writer must plan his work according to some other method. One good test for determining whether he has succeeded or not is the question: "Have I kept together the facts and ideas which in my judgment most closely belong together?" Another good test is the question: "Will the reader feel that each sentence has helped him better to understand the sentence that follows, and when he has read the last sentence will everything be clear to him?"

## 52. Explaining a step at a time.

Where the subject you are going to explain is large or complicated, you can always divide it into a number of sub-topics. These you can arrange in some reasonable order and you can then explain each in a paragraph. If you do this well, so that the paragraphs follow each other smoothly and easily, you will have a

clear and orderly theme. Let us suppose that your subject is a School Paper and that these topics occur to you: (1) The Expense; (2) The Paper as an Encouragement to Athletics; (3) The Paper as a School Critic; (4) The Collecting of Advertisements; (5) The Paper as an Encouragement to Writing; (6) The Paper and School Spirit; (7) How to Select the Editors. These topics you will arrange, let us say, in the following order:

The Expense.

How to Select the Editors.

The Collecting of Advertisements.

The Paper as an Encouragement to Writing.

The Paper as an Encouragement to Athletics.

The Paper and School Spirit.

The Paper as a School Critic.

In arranging your sub-topics remember: First, where the topics can be arranged according to some order of time, that order is usually convenient to follow; second, a reader likes to begin with the simplest topics and go step by step to the more difficult; third, a reader likes to have an explanation, like a story, grow more and more interesting.

Select some one of the following subjects, divide it into sub-topics, arrange them in what you consider the best order, write them up and combine them into a theme.

Raising Chickens.

Building a Boat.

Gas from the Coal Car to the Gas Jet.

The Printing and Distribution of Newspapers.

How the Business of a Fire Company is Conducted.

How My Mother Cleans House.

How the President of the United States is Elected.

How to Weave a Basket.

### 53. Plan of a theme.

Examine the following three subjects; select one; consider carefully how you would treat it, if you wished to make it clear to Benjamin Franklin, or to some one who knows neither more nor less than he did in 1789; be prepared to answer all the questions on it in this chapter.

#### 1. THE ROUGH RIDERS.

What of the following names or terms would have to be explained to Benjamin Franklin?

Spain.	Roosevelt.
The Spanish War.	The Cowboy.
Its Causes.	Khaki.
Its Duration.	Volunteers.
Its Results.	Block Houses.
The West.	Regulars.
Florida.	Broncos.
Transports.	Blockades.
The City of Washington.	Mounted Infantry.

#### 2. THE MODERN ATHLETIC GIRL.

What of the following names or terms would have to be explained to Benjamin Franklin?

Skates.	Co-education.
Coasting.	Gymnasiums.
Basket-Ball.	Swimming Pools.
Golf.	Summer Camps.
Tennis	Cat-boats.
Rowing.	Knock-about.



### 3. SLOT MACHINES.

What of the following names or terms would have to be explained to Benjamin Franklin?

Railway Stations.	Pennies.
Elevated Railway Stations.	Nickels.
Ferry Houses.	The Present Population.
Chewing Gum.	Chocolates.

For what purpose or from what point of view do you believe Franklin would like to have the first subject explained? the second? the third?

Can the subject you have chosen be treated chronologically?

Write a good opening sentence. Write a good concluding sentence. Divide your subject into sub-topics and arrange them in the order in which you would treat them.

Write a theme on one of these three subjects as if for Benjamin Franklin or one of his contemporaries.

### 54. On paragraphs.

We never understand a difficult matter at once. We take it a step at a time. Each step must be perfectly clear before we can take the next. This is the reason why a good explanation of any length is divided into paragraphs. Each paragraph is a little theme which clears up one definite part of the subject so that we can better understand the paragraphs that follow. To know that we have finished one part of a subject and are ready for something new is always a pleasure. This sort of pleasure a skilful writer almost always gives us. In the opening sentence, he

tells us what the new paragraph is to be about; and he ends the paragraph with snap. In this way when we have accomplished something, we know that we have accomplished it; when we undertake something new, we know that we are undertaking it.

The following selection is an account of the Esquimaux boat known as the Kayack. It is taken from Captain Elisha Kent Kane's history of the United States Grinnell Expedition in Search of Sir John Franklin. Take up each paragraph in turn and be prepared to tell what its topic is. In each paragraph, what are the first words to indicate the subject; what do you find in the last words which gives them their snap?

The common length of the kayack is about eighteen feet, its breadth on deck some twenty-one inches, and its depth ten inches in the middle, just such as to allow its occupant to sit with his feet extended on the bottom and his hips below deck. It is always built with a nice adaptation to his weight.

Its frame is light enough to startle all our notions of naval construction, and it is covered with nothing but tanned seal-hide. Yet in this egg-shell fabric the Esquimaux navigator habitually, and fearlessly, and successfully, too, encounters risks which his more civilized rivals in the seal hunt, the men of New Bedford and Stonington, would rightfully shrink from. . . .

The skeleton consists of three longitudinal strips of wood on each side—it would be wrong to call them timbers for they are rarely thicker than a common plastering lath—stretching from end to end, and shielded at the stem and stern by cutwaters of bone. The upper of these, the gunwale, if I may call it so, is somewhat stouter than the others. The bottom is framed by three similar longitudinal strips. These are crossed by other strips or hoops, which

perform the office of knees or ribs; they are placed at a distance of not more than eight or ten inches from one another. Wherever the parts of this framework meet or cross, they are bound together with reindeer tendon very artistically. . . .

Covering over this little basket-work of wood is stretched the coating of seal hides which also covers the deck, very neatly sewed with tendon and firmly glued at the edges by a composition of reindeer horn scraped and liquefied in oil. A varnish made of the same material is used to protect the whole exterior.

The pah, or man-hole, as we would term it, is very nearly in the centre of the little vessel, sometimes a few inches toward the stern. It is circular or nearly so, wide enough to let the kayacker squeeze his ribs through it and no more. It has a rim, or lip, secured upon the gunwale, and rising a couple of inches above the deck, so as to permit the navigator to bind it water-tight around his person. Immediately in front of him is his *as-say-leut*, or line stand, surmounted by a reel, with the sealing-line snugly coiled about it and revolving on its centre with the slightest touch. He has his harpoon and his lances strapped at his side; his rifle, if he owns one, stowed away securely between decks.

### 55. Arousing curiosity.

It is the easiest thing in the world to write clumsy paragraphs. It takes skill to write good ones. And this skill we can acquire only by using our common sense, observing what others have written before us, and vigorously practising in the attempt to do as well. The rest of this chapter contains some examples of the various ways in which writers arrange their ideas clearly, hold the interest of the reader, and express themselves in a way that seems smooth and easy to follow.

In the following selection the writer *excites our curiosity*. He sets us on the scent of what he has to tell us and keeps adding to our curiosity as well as to our information until he closes by letting the secret out. This is a difficult sort of paragraph to write. It won't do to puzzle or confuse the reader with our secret and we must not disappoint his expectations by ending with something flat and unimportant.

How do birds find their way over the hundreds or thousands of miles between the winter and summer homes? Among day migrants sight is probably the principal guide, and it is noticeable that these seldom make the long single flights so common with night migrants. Sight undoubtedly plays a part in guiding the night journeys also; on clear nights, especially when the moon shines brightly, migrating birds fly high, and the ear can scarcely distinguish their faint twitterings; if clouds overspread the heavens, the passing flocks sink their course nearer to the earth, and their notes are much more distinctly heard; and on very dark nights one may even hear the flutter of vibrant wings but a few feet overhead. So far as known, birds never intentionally migrate above the clouds, and when suddenly formed vapor cuts them off from sight of the earth, they lower their flight until the friendly landscape is again visible. Nevertheless, something besides sight guides these travelers in the upper air. In Alaska a few years ago members of the Biological Survey on the Harriman expedition went by steamer from the island of Unalaska to Bogoslof Island, a distance of about sixty miles. A dense fog had shut out every object beyond a hundred yards. When the steamer was half-way across, flocks of murre, returning to Bogoslof after long quests for food, began to break through the fog wall astern, fly parallel with the vessel, and disappear in the mists ahead. By chart and compass the ship was heading straight for the island; but its course was no more exact than that taken by the

birds. The power which carried them unerringly home over the ocean wastes, whatever its nature, may be called a sense of direction.

WELLS W. COOK: "Some New Facts about the Migration of Birds" (in the *Yearbook of the Department of Agriculture*, 1903).

## 56. Beginning with a general statement.

In the next selection the writer *begins with a general statement* and follows it with illustrations. It is not hard to learn to write paragraphs in this way and they are often interesting. But the first sentence must be worth reading and every illustration must add a little something new to the interest or the writing will grow tedious.

Many distinguished Englishmen have had some favorite physical amusement that we associate with their names. It is almost a part of an Englishman's nature to select a physical pursuit and make it especially his own. His countrymen like him the better for having a taste of this kind. Mr. Gladstone's practised skill in tree-felling is a help to his popularity. The readers of Wordsworth, Scott, and Byron, all remember that the first was a pedestrian, the second a keen sportsman, and the third the best swimmer of his time. The readers of Keats are sorry for the ill-health that spoiled the latter years of his short life, but they remember with satisfaction that the ethereal poet was once muscular enough to administer "a severe drubbing to a butcher whom he caught beating a little boy, to the enthusiastic admiration of a crowd of bystanders." Shelley's name is associated forever with his love of boating and its disastrous ending. In our own day, when we learn something about the private life of our celebrated contemporaries, we have a satisfaction in knowing that they

enjoy some physical recreation, as, for example, that Tyn-dall is a mountaineer, Millais a grouse-shooter, John Bright a salmon-fisher; and it is characteristic of the inveteracy of English physical habits that Mr. Fawcett should have gone on riding and skating after he was blind, and that Anthony Trollope was still passionately fond of fox-hunting when he was old and heavy and could hardly see. The English have such a respect for physical energy that they still remember with pleasure how Palmerston hunted in his old age and how, almost to the last, he would go down to Epsom on horseback. There was a little difficulty about getting him into the saddle, but, once there, he was safe till the end of his journey.

PHILIP GILBERT HAMERTON: *French and English* (Little, Brown & Company).

### 57. Similarity of construction.

In the next two selections what *similarities in thought* do you find and what *similarities in form* between the groups of words marked <sup>a</sup>, between those marked <sup>b</sup>; between those marked <sup>c</sup>, etc.? When groups of words are similar in form because they have some similarity in thought or significance they are said to be in *parallel construction*. What advantage is there in parallel construction in these selections?

Gustavus Peninsula seems to be a recent deposit of the glaciers, and our experts thought it not much over a century old. The botanists here found a good illustration of the successive steps Nature takes in *foresting* <sup>a</sup> or *reforesting* <sup>a</sup> the land,—how *she creeps* <sup>b</sup> before *she walks*. <sup>b</sup> The first shrub is a small creeping willow that looks like a kind of “pusley.” Then *comes a larger willow*, <sup>c</sup> less creeping; then *two or more other species* <sup>c</sup> that become quite large upright bushes; *then follow alders*, <sup>c</sup> and with them various

herbaceous plants and grasses, till finally the spruce comes in and takes possession of the land.

JOHN BURROUGHS: *Far and Near* (Houghton, Mifflin & Company).

No Japanese woman is ashamed to show that she is getting along in years, but all take pains that every detail of the dress and coiffure shall show the full age of the wearer. The baby girl is dressed *in the brightest of colors<sup>d</sup> and the largest of patterns,<sup>d</sup> and looks like a gay butterfly<sup>e</sup> or tropical bird.<sup>e</sup> As she grows older,<sup>b</sup> colors become quieter,<sup>b</sup> figures smaller,<sup>b</sup> stripes narrower,<sup>b</sup> until in old age she becomes a little gray moth<sup>g</sup> or plain-colored sparrow.<sup>g</sup>* By the sophisticated eye, a woman's age can be told with considerable accuracy by the various little things about her costume, and no woman cares to appear younger than her real age, or hesitates to tell with entire frankness the number of years that have passed over her head.

ALICE MABEL BACON: *Japanese Girls and Women* (Houghton, Mifflin & Company).

### 58. On the subjects of sentences.

It is very easy to repeat the same word over and over again in a paragraph. It is particularly easy to begin sentence after sentence with *he*, or with *they* or with *it*. On the other hand, unless we take pains we are very likely to introduce our sentences with so many different sorts of grammatical subjects that we make the whole paragraph criss-cross.

In this selection, how does the writer avoid repeating the word *fish*? The grammatical subjects of the sentences are in italics. Have they any close connection in thought?

The *eyes* of fish are generally flat, which seems most suitable to the element in which they live. Their *vision*, how-

ever, is probably very indistinct; at least it appears so from the experiments I have been able to make upon their eyes, by fixing them in the apparatus of a camera obscura. *They* seem, likewise, to have but an obscure perception of sounds, and probably they receive this sensation by the tremors of the element in which they live, operating rather upon their whole system, than by any mechanism adapted for that purpose. Their *senses*, therefore, seem no way exquisite, and their *pleasures* are almost entirely confined to the satisfaction they find in appeasing their hunger. It is this *appetite* alone which impels them to encounter every danger; their *rapacity* seems insatiable; even when taken out of the water, and expiring, *they* greedily swallow the very bait by which they were allured to their destruction.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH: *A Familiar Introduction to the Study of Natural History.*

### 59. Connectives.

We cannot hope to make our paragraphs easy to follow unless we exercise some skill in the use of connectives, such as *and*, *but*, *however*, *nevertheless*, *accordingly*, *consequently*, and in the use of phrases that act as connectives, such as *to be sure*, *for this reason*, *of course*. Connectives are like finger posts. Some point us straight in the road in which we have been going. Such connectives are *and*, *therefore*, *thus*, *in consequence*; some point us into a different path as *although*, *except for the fact that*; still others point us back to the original path after we have been turned from it for a little while. Such connectives are *however*, *nevertheless*, *notwithstanding this fact*.

In the next selection which connective turns the reader from the path for a time; which turns him back into the original path?



It was quite consistent with the general view of regarding animals as merely things that the early English law, upon which ours is founded, allowed very little support to efforts for protection of animals. To injure an animal which belonged to another man could, *indeed*, be prosecuted as a breach of the owner's right of property. *And* abusing an animal in public view was punishable; such conduct was a nuisance; for it was either shocking or demoralizing to those who witnessed it. *But* beyond these rules there was no clear rule for the punishment of cruelty. A man might torture an animal belonging to himself, within his own private premises, and go free of punishment.

B. V. ABBOTT: *Judge and Jury* (Harper & Brothers).

#### 60. Exercise.

The following selection is an account of the streets of London as they probably appeared in 1712. No doubt, many a man walked through these streets every day without thinking them in any way extraordinary. It is because we live in the twentieth century that we think the place must have been striking. No doubt, too, the author of this selection has gone out of his way to pick out the most picturesque and interesting elements in the life he is describing. For much of his knowledge he has had to depend on old satires, caricatures, humorous essays, and grotesque pictures. To the people of 2100 with all the latest improvements which they will no doubt enjoy, the streets of our day could probably be made to appear just as extraordinary.

The London in which they lived—for they were most of them Londoners—one might walk the length of in but little over an hour and across it in less than half that time.

To do it, however, one would often have to dodge into the street among gilded hackney coaches and fashionable sedan chairs, or else elbow his way brusquely and at risk of an affray, among porters bent under their loads of merchandise, shopmen stationed at their doors, apprentices, hawkers, sneak thieves, sauntering fops, and big town bullies. The streets were narrow. There were no street numbers, and shopkeepers distinguished their shops by elaborate signs—blue boars, black swans, red lions, and hogs in armor—which swung on creaking hinges over the passers-by. The sidewalks were narrow and divided from the streets by open gutters—kennels they called them then—and by an awkward arrangement of posts and chains. To walk near these kennels in rainy weather was to be drenched from the gutter spouts which, while they hung out a good distance toward the gutters, never sent their stream quite clear of the sidewalk. Rain or shine, men could always pick a quarrel on the privilege of keeping to the wall. One of the most vivid pictures we have of London streets is due to these quarrels regarding the wall. It is from a satirist of the time and runs as follows:

You'll sometimes meet a fop, of nicest tread,  
Whose mantling peruke veils his empty head,  
At ev'ry step he dreads the wall to lose,  
And risks, to save a coach, his red-heel'd shoes,  
Him like the miller pass with caution by  
Lest from his shoulders clouds of powder fly;  
But when the bully with assuming pace  
Cocks his broad hat, edg'd round with tarnish'd lace,  
Yield not the way; defy his strutting pride,  
And thrust him to the muddy kennel's side.  
He never turns again, nor dares oppose,  
But mutters coward curses as he goes.

At night, the tin vessels that served for lamps diffused so little light, that every man with an honest errand engaged a torch-bearer to light him on his way. As for protection, every man had to trust to his own rapier.

"Apparelled in thick, heavy great-coats, the watchmen perambulated the streets, crying the hour after the chimes, taking precautions for the prevention of fire, proclaiming tidings of foul or fair weather and awakening at day-break all those who intended setting out on a journey." Neither watchman nor constable, however, had enough wit to serve an honest man in time of danger. The greatest fear at night came not from ordinary criminals, though these were common enough, but from bands of aristocratic young rowdies, who seized peaceable men and women on the streets, tattooed or slashed their faces, rolled reputable women round in barrels, or, imitating the fox hunt, chased some citizen about town till finally they had him at their mercy. Then they kept him dancing with pricks of their swords. Of these ruffians, the most notorious were the Mohocks. It was probably of these that Dr. Johnson was thinking when he wrote the lines:

Some fiery fop with new commission vain,  
Who sleeps on brambles till he kills his man—  
Some frolic drunkard, reeling from a feast,  
Provokes a broil and stabs you for a jest.

Introduction to ADDISON AND STEELE: *The Roger de Coverley Papers*.

Imagine yourself as living two hundred years hence. From that point of view explain what you suppose yourself to have learned of the streets of to-day. One good way of preparing such a theme as this would be to make a list of all the striking and particularly all the crude things that people more civilized than we might notice in our streets—unnecessary noises, ugly billboards, loose papers on the street, danger from automobiles, etc. These could be classified, as one would classify papers in the pigeon-holes of a desk, under separate heads as (1) Sights, (2) Noises, (3) Dangers,

(4) Beggars and Other Odd Street Characters. And these topics can be arranged in the order which will make the theme grow increasingly interesting from the beginning to the end. In each paragraph, let the opening sentence indicate what the paragraph is to be about, make free use of parallel construction, and use enough connectives to show the relation of your ideas and facts to one another.

#### 61. A study of paragraphs.

In the following selections pick out the paragraphs which begin with a general topic followed by illustrations. Pick out one paragraph in each selection and point out all the instances of parallel construction. Point out where the writers change the direction of the thought by the use of connectives. In what places is a chronological order followed?

Show some instances where the writer goes from what is simpler to understand to what is more difficult; from what is less interesting to what is more interesting. Select three paragraphs which in your judgment end with snap; select three which open well.

Generally speaking, we construct for endurance, the Japanese for impermanency. Few things for common use are made in Japan with a view to durability. The straw sandals worn out and replaced at each stage of a journey; the robe consisting of a few simple widths loosely stitched together for wearing, and unstitched again for washing; the fresh chopsticks served to each new guest at a hotel; the light shōji frames serving at once for windows and walls, and repapered twice a year; the mattings renewed every autumn,—all these are but random examples of count-

less small things in daily life that illustrate the national contentment with impermanency.

What is the story of a common Japanese dwelling? Leaving my home in the morning, I observe, as I pass the corner of the next street crossing mine, some men setting up bamboo poles on a vacant lot there. Returning, after five hours' absence, I find on the same lot the skeleton of a two-story house. Next forenoon I see that the walls are nearly finished already,—mud and wattles. By sundown the roof has been completely tiled. On the following morning I observe that the mattings have been put down, and the inside plastering has been finished. In five days the house is completed. This, of course, is a cheap building; a fine one would take much longer to put up and finish. But Japanese cities are for the most part composed of such common buildings. They are as cheap as they are simple.

I cannot now remember where I first met with the observation that the curve of the Chinese roof might preserve the memory of the nomad tent. The idea haunted me long after I had ungratefully forgotten the book in which I found it; and when I first saw, in Izumo, the singular structure of the old Shintō temples, with queer cross-projections at their gable-ends and upon their roof-ridges, the suggestion of the forgotten essayist about the possible origin of much less ancient forms returned to me with great force. But there is much in Japan besides primitive architectural traditions to indicate a nomadic ancestry for the race. Always and everywhere there is a total absence of what we would call solidity; and the characteristics of impermanence seem to mark almost everything in the exterior life of the people, except, indeed, the immemorial costume of the peasant and the shape of the implements of his toil. Not to dwell upon the fact that even during the comparatively brief period of her written history Japan has had more than sixty capitals, of which the greater number have completely disappeared, it may be broadly stated that every Japanese city is rebuilt within the time of a generation. Some temples and a few colossal fortresses offer exceptions; but, as a general rule,

the Japanese city changes its substance, if not its form, in the lifetime of a man. Fires, earthquakes, and many other causes partly account for this; the chief reason, however, is that houses are not built to last. The common people have no ancestral homes. The dearest spot to all is, not the place of birth, but the place of burial; and there is little that is permanent save the resting-places of the dead and the sites of the ancient shrines.

The land itself is a land of impermanence. Rivers shift their courses, coasts their outline, plains their level; volcanic peaks heighten or crumble; valleys are blocked by lava-floods or landslides; lakes appear and disappear. Even the matchless shape of Fuji, that snowy miracle which has been the inspiration of artists for centuries, is said to have been slightly changed since my advent to the country; and not a few other mountains have in the same short time taken totally new forms. Only the general aspects of its nature, the general character of the seasons, remain fixed. Even the very beauty of the landscapes is largely illusive,—a beauty of shifting colors and moving mists. Only he to whom those landscapes are familiar can know how their mountain vapors make mockery of real changes which have been, and ghostly predictions of other changes yet to be, in the history of the archipelago.

The gods, indeed, remain,—haunt their homes upon the hills, diffuse a soft religious awe through the twilight of their groves, perhaps because they are without form and substance. Their shrines seldom pass utterly into oblivion, like the dwellings of men. But every Shintō temple is necessarily rebuilt at more or less brief intervals: and the holiest—the shrine of Isé,—in obedience to immemorial custom, must be demolished every twenty years, and its timbers cut into thousands of tiny charms, which are distributed to pilgrims.

LAFCADIO HEARN: *Kokoro* (Houghton, Mifflin & Company).

Johnson came up to London precisely at the time when the condition of a man of letters was most miserable and

degraded. It was a dark night between two sunny days. The age of patronage had passed away. The age of general curiosity and intelligence had not arrived. . . . The patronage of the public did not yet furnish the means of comfortable subsistence. The prices paid by the booksellers to authors were so low that a man of considerable talents and unremitting industry could little more than provide for the day which was passing over him. . . . All that was squalid and miserable might now be summed up in the word poet. That word denoted a creature dressed like a scarecrow, familiar with compters and spunging houses and perfectly qualified to decide on the comparative merits of the Common Side of the King's Bench prison and of Mount Scoundrel in the Fleet. Even the poorest pitied him; and they well might pity him, for if their condition was equally abject, their aspirings were not equally high nor their sense of insult equally acute. To lodge in a garret up four pair of stairs, to dine in a cellar among footmen out of place, to translate ten hours a day for the wages of a ditcher, to be hunted by bailiffs from one haunt of beggary and pestilence to another, from Grub Street to St. George's Fields, and from St. George's Fields to the alleys behind St. Martin's church; to sleep on a bulk in June, and amidst the ashes of a glass house in December, to die in an hospital and to be buried in a parish vault, was the fate of more than one writer who, if he had lived thirty years earlier, would have been admitted to the sittings of the Kitcat or the Scriblerus club, would have sat in Parliament, and would have been entrusted with embassies to the High allies; who, if he had lived in our time, would have found encouragement scarcely less munificent in Albemarle Street or in Paternoster Row.

As every climate has its peculiar diseases, so every walk of life has its peculiar temptations. The literary character, assuredly, has always had its share of faults, vanity, jealousy, morbid sensibility. To these faults were now superadded the faults which are commonly found in men whose livelihood is precarious, and whose principles are exposed to the trial of severe distress. All the vices of

the gambler and of the beggar were blended with those of the author. The prizes in the wretched lottery of book-making were scarcely less ruinous than the blanks. If good fortune came, it came in such a manner that it was almost certain to be abused. After months of starvation and despair, a full third night or a well-received dedication filled the pocket of the lean, ragged, unwashed poet with guineas. He hastened to enjoy those luxuries with the images of which his mind had been haunted while he was sleeping amidst the cinders and eating potatoes at the Irish ordinary in Shoe Lane. A week of taverns soon qualified him for another year of night-cellars. Such was the life of Savage, of Boyse, and of a crowd of others. Sometimes blazing in gold-laced hats and waistcoats; sometimes lying in bed because their coats had gone to pieces, or wearing paper cravats because their linen was in pawn; sometimes drinking champagne and Tokay with Betty Careless; sometimes standing at the window of an eating-house in Porridge Island to snuff up the scent of what they could not afford to taste; they knew luxury; they knew beggary; but they never knew comfort. These men were irreclaimable. They looked on a regular and frugal life with the same aversion which an old gipsy or a Mohawk hunter feels for a stationary abode, and for the restraints and securities of civilized communities. They were as untamable, as much wedded to their desolate freedom, as the wild ass. They could no more be broken into the offices of social man than the unicorn could be trained to serve and abide by the crib. It was well if they did not, like beasts of a still fiercer race, tear the hand which ministered to their necessities. To assist them was impossible; and the most benevolent of mankind at length became weary of giving relief which was dissipated with the wildest profusion as soon as it had been received. If a sum was bestowed on the wretched adventurer such as, properly husbanded, might have supplied him for six months, it was instantly spent in strange freaks of sensuality, and before forty-eight hours had elapsed the poet was again pestering all his acquaintance for twopence to get a plate of shin of



beef at a subterranean cook's-shop. If his friends gave him an asylum in their houses, these houses were forthwith turned into bagnios and taverns. All order was destroyed; all business was suspended. The most good-natured host began to repent of his eagerness to serve a man of genius in distress when he heard his guest roaring for fresh punch at five o'clock in the morning.

MACAULAY: *Life of Johnson.*

## 62. An exercise.

Write a theme on one of the following subjects.

1. City Markets; Where and How They Get Supplies; When and How They Dispose of Their Waste.
2. The Birds about My Home; What They Are; Their Appearance; Their Habits.
3. Taking Care of a Dog.
4. Making a Bob-Sled.
5. Why the Days are Shorter in Winter than in Summer.
6. Popular Superstitions.
7. Palmistry.
8. Managing a Flower Garden.

## 63. On being vivid.

A lecturer with stereopticon slides is more popular than one without. We all like to see what is being explained to us. It is not simply that the pictures are pleasant in themselves. We like them because they make the explanation clearer. We recognize how valuable the eyes are to us in enabling us to understand a difficult matter when we say impatiently in the midst of an explanation that isn't going well, "O! if I could only show you," or "Well, you'll have to see it for yourself," or "If I could only make you see it."

Now this is just what a writer must try to do. He must "make us see it." He cannot, of course, bring objects into the room and show them to us. He cannot always illustrate his subject with drawings. But he can always describe it so that we shall have mental pictures of it.

In your theme for Section 60 this is what you tried to do. Instead of saying in a general way that modern streets are noisy, you spoke, perhaps, of the toot of the automobiles, the rattle of the milk-wagon, the noise of iron girders as they are carted over a Belgian block pavement. On pages 85-88, Macaulay does this same thing. To tell us that poets translated ten hours a day for the wages of a ditcher is much more vivid than to tell us simply that they were poor. To say that they roared for punch at five o'clock in the morning is much more specific than to say that they were impudent and dissipated.

There would be no knowledge at all in this world if we were without eyes, noses, hearing, the power of taste and feeling. These are the ways in which knowledge comes to us. An alert writer remembers this fact and tries to give his reader knowledge first hand.

What general truth does Lafcadio Hearn illustrate (pages 83-85) by the account of the building of a Japanese dwelling?

Give two specific examples of the fact that the land of Japan is a land of impermanence.

What general truth is illustrated by the story of Keats and the butcher, page 76?

#### 64. An example of vividness.

The following selection is from a lecture delivered by a celebrated London physician to medical students. This lecture has three remarkable qualities: (1) The illustrations are so homely and simple that anybody can understand them. (2) There is a great variety of illustration. (3) Every illustration belongs in the address because it helps make the explanation clearer.

When a man thinks vigorously, the blood leaves the extremities in order to supply the brain with the blood it requires, and you may stimulate the centres of the brain, both the sensory and motor, by increasing their supply of blood. For this reason we find when men have got hard mental work to do they fall upon various plans for stimulating their brains. Some men when working will walk about, others again will lie perfectly quiet. These two methods of proceeding seem incompatible, and yet, if you take into consideration the different constitutions of the men who do these things, you will find that both are trying in different ways to increase the supply of blood to their brain. The men who walk about all the time they are thinking are exciting their heart by physical exercise, and thus driving more blood to their brain; the men who lie quiet are inducing more blood to flow to their brain by lessening the flow through the muscles and elsewhere. I daresay many of you may remember Mark Twain's experiences in his *New Pilgrim's Progress* when he got a horse so old and so feeble that it "wanted to lean up against a post to think." Now you find that where circulation is feeble people want to lean up against a post to think, and if you ask them a question suddenly in the street they do not answer you; they have to stop still and think. In them, muscular exercise and mental exertion are incompatible.

Position has got a good deal to do with the supply of blood to the brain, and in men who are very tall, and in

whom the circulation is not very strong, the best work may be done, not by walking about while they are thinking, but by lying perfectly quiet and in a peculiar position. There is one of our best known writers who is very tall and not very stout. He writes admirably, but he has a very large and fine head and a somewhat slender body which does not seem strong enough to supply it with blood. I was told that his method of writing was peculiar; that he lay down upon a sofa and wrote with his head low down. This statement seemed to me so interesting physiologically that I was not content to take it at second hand, and so I asked him one day if it were true. He then told me that he writes kneeling down upon the sofa, with his paper resting on the end of the sofa so that his heart and head are nearly on a level. Thus he secures a free supply of blood to his brain, and though it is not usually carried out to the same extent as in this instance, yet the instinct of people generally has taught them to lower their heads when they are engaged in thinking. . . . Not uncommonly they rest their chin upon their hand. . . . When the circulation is weakened by the action of grief or other depressing emotions in the heart, the head is usually lowered still farther and the hands are pressed against the temples. . . . You may, therefore, stimulate the brain either by stimulating the circulation through increased cardiac action, or by increased supply of blood by position.

There are other ways of stimulating the brain, and one is by local dilatation of the vessels. You will find that in almost every country people have hit upon some way of causing local dilatation of the vessels of the brain. When people are puzzled they do something or other that seems to help them. If you ask an English rustic a question that troubles him, it is very likely that he will scratch his head, while another man will pull his moustache or beard. Another, again, especially in Germany, will slap the side of his nose with his finger. In all these ways you get a stimulus applied to some branch of the fifth nerve; and it would appear that stimulation of the fifth nerve, either outside the head or inside, tends to cause local dilatation

of the cerebral vessels. Many writers, when they are puzzled, and do not know exactly how to put the thing they want to express, stimulate the gustatory branches and the buccal branches of the fifth by taking something that has got a strong taste. For example, the late Lord Derby used to eat brandied cherries while he was engaged in his classical work; others, again, smoke cigarettes; others chew tobacco; while others eat figs, chocolate creams, or something of the same sort. In all those ways you get stimulation of the branches of the fifth nerve of the mouth. Others again stimulate the nasal branches, the Germans, as I said before, by striking the outside of the nose with a finger, some others by taking snuff. In all these ways you stimulate the fifth nerve and increase the cerebral circulation.

T. LAUDER BRUNTON: *Lectures on the Actions of Medicine* (The Macmillan Company).

#### 65. Exercise.

Write a theme on one of the following subjects. Be sure to make your reader see, by giving clear and vivid pictures of what you see yourself.

How I Spend My Summers.

An Account of Last Sunday's Sermons.

Good Points in a Dog.

How Paper is Made.

Stamp Collections.

What I Like in the Foreigners I Have Met.

Recovering Lost Articles.

How Far Private Property is Respected in School.

#### 66. On comparisons.

In your last theme you used striking and representative facts to make the subject clear. We can also use comparisons for the same purpose. We can com-

pare things for the sake of contrasting them. This is called antithesis. On page 83, we have a very good illustration of this method of comparison in the sentence "Generally speaking, we construct for endurance; the Japanese for impermanency." We can compare things by stating that one is like another. Such comparisons are called *similes*. On page 87, we have a very good simile in the sentence "They looked on a regular or frugal life with the same aversion which an old Gipsy or Mohawk hunter feels for a stationary abode, etc." We can compare objects by substituting the name of one for the name of the other. Such comparisons are called metaphors. On page 78, we have two good metaphors in the phrase "She becomes a little gray moth or plain colored sparrow."

In the selection from Macaulay, pages 85-88, point out three instances of contrast; three metaphors.

Bring in in writing five examples of contrasts; five similes; five metaphors; which you have found in your reading.

Figures of speech, as metaphors, similes and antitheses are called, may go a long way toward making a subject clear. There is no other way of putting so much in a few words. We learn a great deal when we hear a man called a sponge, are told that a woman's face was as white as a ghost, or are told of a married couple that he was as coarse as she was gentle. Sometimes figures of speech are absolutely necessary. The small boy who took a mouthful of mustard and said it tasted as if a bee had stung him, could not have expressed himself at all, if he had not thought of a metaphor. Revivalists, ward politicians, and other

people who have to explain themselves to all sorts and conditions of men, quickly get the habit of using telling, picturesque metaphors, similes, and antitheses.

A figure of speech has no excuse in any piece of writing unless it makes the subject clearer. Young writers sometimes overdo figures for the mere sake of ornament. They make a mistake. It is never wise to turn from what one is doing to doing something else. It is never wise to stop explaining for the sake of being pretty.

Some writers like to exercise their ingenuity in thinking of all sorts of extraordinary and far-fetched figures of speech. When the reader finds them he wrinkles his brow and wonders what the writer is driving at. Where we should exercise our ingenuity is in thinking of simple, straightforward, easily intelligible figures that will bring our subject directly home to our readers.

After we have heard the same figure of speech a number of times, it loses its force. When we come across the phrase "fleecy clouds" most of us no longer think of sheep; when we come across the phrase "Old Sol" we no longer think it funny. People who have too much sense to keep telling us that "twice two is four" keep telling us that trees "stood like sentinels" quite as if we hadn't known that fact for a number of years.

#### **67. A study in comparisons.**

Examine the following figures of speech; pick out those that seem to you far-fetched; those that seem

natural and really help to make the writer's point; those that called up a confused or muddled picture.

The moon, racing through a world of flying clouds of every size and shape and density, some black as ink stains, some delicate as lawn, threw the marvel of her southern brightness over the same lovely and detested scene,—the island mountains crowned with the perennial island cloud, the embowered city studded with rare lamps, the masts in the harbor, the smooth mirror of the lagoon, and the mole of the barrier reef on which the breakers whitened. The moon shone, too, with bull's-eye sweeps on his companions.

If you were to make little fishes talk, they would talk like whales.

I have distended the bottle of my brain with the delectable liquor of observation.

He beat his old hands like clappers in a mill.

To be, or not to be; that is the question:  
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer  
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,  
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles  
And by opposing end them?

But the wind without was eager and sharp;  
Of Sir Launfal's gray hair it makes a harp.

Pitiful is the case of the blind, who cannot read the face; pitiful that of the deaf, who cannot follow the changes of the voice. And there are others also to be pitied; for there are some of an inert, uneloquent nature, who have been denied all the symbols of communication, who have neither a lively play of facial expression, nor speaking gestures nor a responsive voice, nor yet the gift of frank, explanatory speech; people truly made of clay, people tied for life into a bag no one can undo.

The religious revival that quickens the heart of Christian morality must lay the ax at the root of this moral barbar-



ism, in whose darkness, mistaking respectability for morality, enormous evils flourish within hearing of church anthems.

If the whirl of a 6-inch shell is perfectly true, it makes a hurtling sound like that produced by the blended wing-beats of a hundred migrating ducks as they pass close over your head. If, however, the rotation of the shell is not true, or if its bearing happens to be a little ragged when it leaves the gun, it makes a noise like the tearing of strong silk. Inasmuch, however, as you can begin to hear this noise a quarter of a mile away, it has the effect of silk that is being torn by an invisible spirit of the air as he approaches you at a speed of six hundred feet a second. It is this swift crescendo of sound that is most trying to the nerves. In the last twelve hundred feet it becomes so loud that you think you must be able to see the projectile that causes it; but the sky is empty, and the first thing that meets the eye is a spraying fountain of dirt, or a geyser of earth and stones with a heart of volcanic fire at the point where the infernal missile strikes. To me the Russian shells always seemed to say, "Here I come, Here I come, *Here I Come*, HERE I COME, BANG!!!" and just before the final "BANG!!!" I was always prepared for sudden death.

Figures of speech cannot be manufactured to order as a school exercise. They can't be got from books. Persons who are alert, are eager to express themselves, are observant and have ideas, will get illustrations of what they have to say from the life about them.

#### 68. Exercise.

Write a theme on one of the following subjects:

Contrast Between a School Session and Recess.

The Taste in Hats in This School.

Conveniences and Inconveniences of Studying Together.

Managing Baggage in Europe and in America.

**69. Exercise in abridgment.**

Read over the following essay carefully and abridge it into a paragraph of about a hundred and fifty words.\* To do this, first make an outline of the essay; then go over the essay, marking the sentences that you think most effective in giving the point of the paragraph in which you find them. These sentences you may be able to include in your abridgment after you have written the first draft. Read over your work to make sure that you are clear and have given all the essentials of the essay.

We cannot be guilty of a greater act of uncharitableness, than to interpret the afflictions which befall our neighbors, as punishments, and judgments. It aggravates the evil to him who suffers, when he looks upon himself as the mark of divine vengeance, and abates the compassion of those towards him, who regard him in so dreadful a light. This humor of turning every misfortune into a judgment, proceeds from wrong notions of religion, which, in its own nature, produces good-will towards men, and puts the mildest construction upon every accident that befalls them. In this case, therefore, it is not religion that sours a man's temper, but it is his temper that sours his religion: people of gloomy, uncheerful imaginations, or of envious, malignant tempers, whatever kind of life they are engaged in, will discover their natural tincture of mind in all their thoughts, words, and actions. As the finest wines

\* If the teacher can find other essays or explanations available for the purpose, several exercises of this sort will prove useful. The originals should not exceed two or three thousand words. They should be notably logical, coherent, and specific. It would be well, if possible, to discuss them in class. Portions of textbooks or introductions to them, portions of Macaulay's essays, or encyclopedia articles carefully selected, may serve the purpose. See also pp. 83-85, 86-88, 90-92 of this book.

have often the taste of the soil, so even the most religious thoughts often draw something that is particular from the constitution of the mind in which they arise. When folly or superstition strike in with this natural depravity of temper, it is not in the power even of religion itself to preserve the character of the person who is possessed with it from appearing highly absurd and ridiculous.

An old maiden gentlewoman, whom I shall conceal under the name of Nemesis, is the greatest discoverer of judgments that I have met with. She can tell you what sin it was that set such a man's house on fire, or blew down his barns. Talk to her of an unfortunate young lady that lost her beauty by the smallpox, she fetches a deep sigh, and tells you that when she had a fine face she was always looking on it in her glass. Tell her of a piece of good fortune that has befallen one of her acquaintance, and she wishes it may prosper with her; but her mother used one of her nieces very barbarously. Her usual remarks turn upon people who had great estates, but never enjoyed them, by reason of some flaw in their own or their father's behavior. She can give you the reason why such an one died childless; why such an one was cut off in the flower of his youth; why such an one was unhappy in her marriage; why one broke his leg on such a particular spot of ground, and why another was killed with a backsword, rather than with any other kind of weapon. She has a crime for every misfortune that can befall any of her acquaintance, and when she hears of a robbery that has been made, or a murder that has been committed, enlarges more on the guilt of the suffering person, than on that of the thief or the assassin. In short, she is so good a Christian that whatever happens to herself is a trial, and whatever happens to her neighbors is a judgment.

The very description of this folly, in ordinary life, is sufficient to expose it; but when it appears in a pomp and dignity of style, it is very apt to amuse and terrify the mind of the reader. Herodotus and Plutarch very often apply judgments as impertinently as the old woman I have before mentioned, though their manner of relating them

makes the folly itself appear venerable. Indeed, most historians, as well Christian as Pagan, have fallen into this idle superstition, and spoken of ill success, unforeseen disasters, and terrible events, as if they had been let into the secrets of Providence, and made acquainted with that private conduct by which the world is governed. One would think several of our own historians in particular had many revelations of this kind made to them. Our old English monks seldom let any of their kings depart in peace, who had endeavored to diminish the power of wealth of which the ecclesiastics were in those times possessed. William the Conqueror's race generally found their judgments in the New Forest, where their father had pulled down churches and monasteries. In short, read one of the chronicles written by an author of this frame of mind, and you would think you were reading an history of the kings of Israel or Judah, where the historians were actually inspired and where, by a particular scheme of Providence, the kings were distinguished by judgments or blessings, according as they promoted idolatry or the worship of the true God.

I cannot but look upon this manner of judging upon misfortunes not only to be very uncharitable in regard to the person whom they befall, but very presumptuous in regard to him who is supposed to inflict them. It is a strong argument for a state of retribution hereafter, that in this world virtuous persons are very often unfortunate, and vicious persons prosperous, which is wholly repugnant to the nature of a Being who appears infinitely wise and good in all his works, unless we may suppose that such a promiscuous and undistinguishing distribution of good and evil which was necessary for carrying on the designs of Providence in this life, will be rectified and made amend for in another. We are not, therefore, to expect that fire should fall from heaven in the ordinary course of Providence; nor when we see triumphant guilt or depressed virtue in particular persons, that Omnipotence will make bare its holy arm in the defence of the one or punishment of the other. It is sufficient that there is a day set apart for the hearing and requiting of both according to their respective merits.

The folly of ascribing temporal judgments to any particular crimes, may appear from several considerations. I shall only mention two: First, that generally speaking, there is no calamity or affliction, which is supposed to have happened as a judgment to a vicious man, which does not sometimes happen to men of approved religion and virtue. When Diagoras the atheist was on board one of the Athenian ships, there arose a very violent tempest; upon which the mariners told him that it was a just judgment upon them for having taken so impious a man on board. Diagoras begged them to look upon the rest of the ships that were in the same distress, and asked them whether or no Diagoras was on board every vessel in the fleet. We are all involved in the same calamities, and subject to the same accidents; and when we see anyone of the species under any particular oppression we should look upon it as arising from the common lot of human nature, rather than from the guilt of the person who suffers.

Another consideration that may check our presumption in putting such a construction upon a misfortune is this, that it is impossible for us to know what are calamities and what are blessings. How many accidents have passed for misfortunes, which have turned to the welfare and prosperity of the persons in whose lot they have fallen? How many disappointments have, in their consequences, saved a man from ruin? If we could look into the effects of everything, we might be allowed to pronounce boldly upon blessings and judgments; but for a man to give his opinion of what he sees but in part, and in its beginnings, is an unjustifiable piece of rashness and folly.

The story of Biton and Clitobus, which was in great reputation among the heathens, for we see it quoted by all the ancient authors, both Greek and Latin, who have written upon the immortality of the soul, may teach us a caution in this matter. These two brothers, being the sons of a lady who was Priestess to Juno, drew their mother's chariot to the temple at the time of a great solemnity, the persons being absent who by their office were to have drawn her chariot on that occasion. The mother was so transported

with this instance of filial duty, that she petitioned her goddess to bestow upon them the greatest gift that could be given to men; upon which they were both cast into a deep sleep and the next morning found dead in the temple. This was such an event as would have been construed into a judgment, had it happened to the two brothers after an act of disobedience, and would doubtless have been represented as such by any ancient historian who had given us an account of it.

JOSEPH ADDISON: *The Spectator*.

## 70. A model explanation.

In general, the houses of the Iroquois Indians were about thirty or thirty-five feet in length, breadth, and height; but many were much larger, and a few were of prodigious length. In some of the villages there were dwellings two hundred and forty feet long, though in breadth and height they did not much exceed the others. In shape they were much like an arbor overarching a garden-walk. Their frame was of tall and strong saplings, planted in a double row to form the two sides of the house, bent till they met, and lashed together at the top. To these, other poles were bound transversely, and the whole was covered with large sheets of the bark of the oak, elm, spruce, or white cedar, overlapping like the shingles of a roof, upon which, for their better security, split poles were made fast with cords of linden bark. At the crown of the arch, along the entire length of the house, an opening a foot wide was left for the admission of life and the escape of smoke. At each end was a close porch of similar construction; and here were stowed casks of bark, filled with smoked fish, Indian corn, and other stores not liable to injury from frost. Within, on both sides, were wide scaffolds, four feet from the floor, and extending the entire length of the house, like the seats of a colossal omnibus. These were formed of thick sheets of bark, supported by posts and transverse poles, and covered with mats and skins. Here, in summer, was the sleeping-place of the inmates, and the

space beneath served for storage of their firewood. The fires were on the ground, in a line down the middle of the house. Each sufficed for two families, who, in winter, slept closely packed around them. Above, just under the vaulted roof, were a great number of poles, like the perches of a hen-roost; and here were suspended weapons, clothing, skins, and ornaments. Here, too, in harvest time, the squaws hung the ears of unshelled corn, till the rude abode, through all its length, seemed decked with a golden tapestry. In general, however, its only lining was a thick coating of soot from the smoke of fires with neither draught, chimney, nor window. So pungent was the smoke that it produced inflammation of the eyes, attended in old age with frequent blindness. Another annoyance was the fleas; and the third, the unbridled and unruly children. Privacy there was none. The house was one chamber, sometimes lodging more than twenty families.

FRANCIS PARKMAN: *The Jesuits in North America.*

## CHAPTER IV

### HOW TO DESCRIBE

#### 71. Some general principles of description.

There are times when we wish to make written pictures of rooms, buildings, settlements, people, landscapes. Such pieces of writing we call descriptions. The motive which prompted the following one, it is very easy to discover. The author, Sir Charles Lyell, was interested in seeing how the world is made. It was for this that he kept his eyes open. He gives a picture of the Mississippi River so as to show us the work that it does in changing the form and structure of the land.

The river traverses the plain in a meandering course, describing immense curves. After sweeping round the half of a circle, it is carried in a rapid current diagonally across the ordinary direction of its channel, to another curve of similar shape. Opposite to each of these, there is always a sand-bar, answering, in the convexity of its form, to the concavity of "the bend," as it is called. The river, by continually wearing these curves deeper, returns, in the manner before described (p. 341) on its own track, so that a vessel in some places, after sailing for twenty-five or thirty miles, is brought round again to within a mile of the place whence it started. When the waters approach so near to each other, it sometimes happens at high floods that they burst through the small tongue of land, and insulate a por-



tion, rushing through what is called the "cut off" so that vessels may pass from one point to another in half a mile to a distance which it previously required a voyage of more than twenty miles to reach. As soon as the river has excavated the new passage, bars of sand and mud are formed at the two points of junction with the old bend, which is soon entirely separated from the main river by a continuous mud-bank covered with wood. The old bend then becomes a semicircular lake of clear water, inhabited by large gar-fish (*Lepidostei*), alligators, and wild fowl, which the steamboats have nearly driven away from the main river. A multitude of such crescent-shaped lakes, scattered far and wide over the alluvial plain, the greater number of them to the west, but some of them also eastward of the Mississippi, bear testimony to the extensive wanderings of the great stream in former ages. For the last two hundred miles above its mouth the course of the river is much less winding than above, there being only in the whole of that distance one great curve, that called the "English Turn." This greater straightness of the stream is ascribed by Mr. Forshey to the superior tenacity of the banks, which are more clayey in this region.

SIR CHARLES LYELL: *Principles of Geology*.

## 72. On being vivid.

Before beginning a description, be sure that you have a *vivid picture of the scene* yourself. Write so that the reader will imagine that he is with you, standing still when you stand still or moving when you move. It is well to do as Sir Charles Lyell has done and begin with a general statement first, a sort of bird's-eye view of the scene. Then you can go to particulars. In giving them, however, don't make your reader's eye jump about too erratically in the socket. It is well to go from east to the west, or from

north to the south, or from up down or down up, or in some way so that it will be easy to follow the direction of your eye. Remember too, that you cannot describe everything that is to be seen. You must choose those things that have made the subject interesting to you. In the following description Thoreau picks out just these things. And he arranges them in a way in which we can see them very easily.

The real attractions of the Hollowell farm, to me, were: its complete retirement, being about two miles from the village, half a mile from the nearest neighbor, and separated from the highway by a broad field; its bounding on the river, which the owner said protected it by its fogs from the frosts in the spring, though that was nothing to me; the gray color and ruinous state of the house and barn and the dilapidated fences, which put such an interval between me and the last occupant; the hollow and lichen-covered apple trees, gnawed by rabbits, showing what kind of neighbors I should have; but above all, the recollection I had of it from my earliest voyages up the river, where the house was concealed behind a dense grove of red maples, through which I heard the house-dog bark. I was in haste to buy it, before the proprietor finished getting out some rocks, cutting down the hollow apple trees, and grubbing up some young birches which had sprung up in the pasture, or in short, had made any more of his improvements.

THOREAU: *Walden* (Houghton, Mifflin & Company).

### 73. Exercise.

What is the purpose of the following description? What does it tell us of the owners? Why does the author tell us about the "frame of imitation beaten brass"? Why does he put the kitchen last instead

of first? Why does he give so much space to describing the pictures?

The sitting-room was particularly charming. Clean matting covered the floor, and two or three bright-colored rugs were scattered here and there. The backs of the chairs were hung with knitted worsted tidies, very gay. The bay window should have been occupied by Trina's sewing machine, but this had been moved to the other side of the room to give place to a little black walnut table with spiral legs, before which the pair were to be married. In one corner stood the parlor melodeon, a family possession of the Sieppes, but given now to Trina as one of her parents' wedding presents. Three pictures hung upon the walls. Two were companion pieces. One of these represented a little boy wearing huge spectacles and trying to smoke an enormous pipe. This was called "I'm Grandpa," the title being printed in large black letters; the companion picture was entitled "I'm Grandma," a little girl in cap and "specs," wearing mits, and knitting. These pictures were hung on either side of the mantelpiece. The other picture was quite an affair, very large and striking. It was a colored lithograph of two little golden-haired girls in their nightgowns. They were kneeling down and saying their prayers; their eyes—very large and very blue—rolled upward. This picture had for name, "Faith," and was bordered with a red plush mat and a frame of imitation beaten brass.

A door hung with chenille portières—a bargain at two dollars and a half—admitted one to the bedroom. The bedroom could boast a carpet, three-ply ingrain, the design being bunches of red and green flowers in yellow baskets on a white ground. The wall-paper was admirable—hundreds and hundreds of tiny Japanese mandarins, all identically alike, helping hundreds of almond-eyed ladies into hundreds of impossible junks, while hundreds of bamboo palms overshadowed the pair, and hundreds of long-legged storks trailed contemptuously away from the scene. This room was prolific in pictures. Most of them were framed colored

prints from Christmas editions of the London "Graphic" and "Illustrated News," the subject of each picture inevitably involving very alert fox terriers and very pretty moon-faced little girls.

Back of the bedroom was the kitchen, a creation of Trina's, a dream of a kitchen with its range, its porcelain-lined sink, its copper boiler, and its overpowering array of flashing tinware. Everything was new; everything was complete.

FRANK NORRIS: *McTeague* (Doubleday, Page & Company).

#### 74. An example of vivid description.

In the following selection we can imagine ourselves moving with the author across the plains.

When we awoke at Shoshone in the early morning, we found a nondescript collection of horses and vehicles awaiting us,—buggies, buckboards, market wagons, and one old Concord four-horse stage, besides a group of saddle-horses for those who were equal to this mode of travel. My seat happened to be beside the driver on top of the old stage-coach, and we went swinging and rocking over the plain in the style in which I made my first journey amid the Catskills in my youth. But how tame were the Catskills of memory in comparison with the snow-capped ranges that bounded our horizon fifty or a hundred miles away: to the north the Saw Tooth Range and "Old Soldier," white as a snow bank; to the southeast the Goose Creek Range; and to the south the Humboldts, far away in Nevada. Our course lay across what was once a sea of molten lava. Our geologists said that some time in the remote past the crust of the earth here had probably cracked over a wide area, allowing the molten lava to flow up through it, like water through rents in the ice, and inundate thousands of square miles of surface, extending even to the Columbia, three hundred miles distant. This old lava bed is now an undulating

sagebrush plain, appearing here and there in broken jagged outcroppings, or in broad, flat plates like a dark, cracked pavement still in place, though partly hidden under a yellowish brown soil. The road was a crooked one, but fairly good. Its course far ahead was often marked to us by a red line visible here and there upon the dull green plain. Flowers, flowers everywhere under the sagebrush, covered the ground. The effect was as of a rough garment with a thin many-colored silk lining. Great patches of lupine, then the delicate fresh bloom of a species of phlox, then larkspur, then areas of white, yellow and purple flowers of many kinds. It is a surprise to Eastern eyes to see a land without turf, yet so dotted with vegetation. It is as if all these things grew in a plowed field, or in the open road; the bare soil is everywhere visible around them. The bunch grass does not make a turf, but grows in scattered tufts like bunches of green bristles. Nothing is crowded. Every shrub and flower has a free space about it. The horsemen and horsewomen careered gayly ahead or lingered behind, resting and botanizing amid the brush. The dust from the leading vehicles was seen rising up miles in advance. We saw an occasional coyote slink away amid the sagebrush.

JOHN BURROUGHS: *Far and Near* (Houghton, Mifflin & Company).

## 75. Exercise.

Write a theme on one of the following subjects:

1. A description of the nature of the country in your neighborhood for the information of a wheelman who is inquiring about it as a possible region for a series of bicycle rides. Give him full information and let him decide for himself.

2. From a Car Window.

3. A Drive.

4. A description of a summer hotel for the information of some one who is thinking of going there for the summer.

5. Behind the Scenes of a Theatre.
6. The Interior of a Church.
7. Going to a Ball-game.

## 76. Settings.

Sometimes we may describe scenes because we wish to use them as settings. The following selection is George Eliot's way of introducing the novel, *Adam Bede*. In this way she tells us that the story is laid in England, not a hundred years ago, and that it is to deal with a very fine sort of English artisan. Notice that the author does not have to limit herself like a painter to putting down what she sees; she can also give us the smell of the wood and the sound of the singing.

With this drop of ink at the end of my pen I will show you the roomy workshop of Mr. Jonathan Burge, carpenter and builder in the village of Hayslope, as it appeared on the eighteenth of June in the year of our Lord 1799.

The afternoon sun was warm on the five workmen there, busy upon doors and window-frames and wainscoting. A scent of pine-wood from a tent-like pile of planks outside the open door mingled itself with the scent of the elder-bushes which were spreading their summer snow close to the open window opposite; the slanting sunbeams shone through the transparent shavings that flew before the steady plane, and lit up the fine grain of the oak panelling which stood propped against the wall. On a heap of those soft shavings a rough gray shepherd-dog had made himself a pleasant bed, and was lying with his nose between his fore-paws, occasionally wrinkling his brows to cast a glance at the tallest of the five workmen, who was carving a shield in the centre of a wooden mantel-piece. It was to this

workman that the strong barytone belonged which was heard above the sound of plane and hammer singing,—

“Awake, my soul, and with the sun  
Thy daily stage of duty run;  
Shake off dull sloth. . . .”

Here some measurement was to be taken which required more concentrated attention, and the sonorous voice subsided into a low whistle; but it presently broke out again with renewed vigor,—

“Let all thy converse be sincere,  
Thy conscience as the noonday clear.”

GEORGE ELIOT: *Adam Bede*.

### 77. Exercise.

Write a description which will make a good setting to a story. If it is a tale of highway robbery, a bleak day and a lonely road might do. For a trout fishing, describe a pool in a mountain brook. For an awkward situation, a hotel piazza, or some other public place. Whatever your imaginary scene and story are to be, they must somehow be suitable to each other.

### 78. On a taste for description.

In every generation there are a few people who delight to express the pleasure they have in the colors, light, and beautiful forms in the world; in its musical sounds, its fragrances, and the good things it has to taste and to touch. The following selection is from Miss Helen Keller. She can neither see nor hear, but feeling along the surface of things gives her a pleasure that most of us are not keen enough to enjoy.

The coolness of a water lily rounding into bloom is different from the coolness of an evening wind in summer,

and different again from the coolness of rain that soaks into the hearts of growing things and gives them life and body. The velvet of the rose is not that of the ripe peach or of a baby's dimpled cheek. The hardness of the rock is to the hardness of wood what a man's deep bass is to a woman's voice when it is low. When I think of hills I think of the upward strength I tread upon. When water is the object of my thought, I feel the cool shock of the plunge and the quiet yielding of the waves that creep and curl and ripple about my body.

*The Century Magazine, 1905.*

The author of this could not write at all of her pleasure in these sensations unless she had what we call a discriminating mind. She enjoys making nice distinctions and picking out the exact words to describe them. No one can write well who cannot do this. A glutton when he talks to us only disgusts us. An epicure may interest us if he can describe a taste so that we can know how it differs from the taste of anything else. The following selection shows some interesting definitions of taste:

There is great beauty, as well as other agreeableness, in a well-disposed fruiterer's window. Here are the round piled-up oranges, deepening almost into red, and heavy with juice; the apple, with its brown-red cheek, as if it had slept in the sun; the pear, swelling downwards, and provocative of a huge bite in the side; thronging grapes, like so many tight little bags of wine; the peach, whose handsome leathern coat strips off so finely; the pearly or ruby-like currants, heaped in light, long baskets; the red little mouthfuls of strawberries, ditto; the larger purple ones of plums, whose old comparison with lips is better than anything new; mulberries, the deep black-watered fountains; the swelling



pomp of melons; the rough, inexorable-looking cocoa-nut, milky at heart; the elaborate elegance of walnuts; the quaint cashoo-nut; almonds, figs, raisins, tamarinds, green leaves: in short,

Whatever Earth, all-bearing mother, yields  
In India East or West, or middle shore  
In Pontus or the Punic coast, or where  
Alcinoüs reign'd; fruit of all kinds, in coat  
Rough, or smooth rind, or bearded husk, or shell.

LEIGH HUNT: *Essays*.

As we see from this account of the fruiterer's one can have a relish for good things, an exact way of describing them, and be full of fun. Humor doesn't spoil a good description, but often adds to it. Humor requires a good-natured way of seeing ourselves as others see us. This is what makes Stevenson's descriptions so pleasant to read; they are natural; he makes no pretences; he is honest; and he is happy. The following is taken from one of his letters:

I took refuge in the terraces which were greenly carpeted with sward, and tried to imitate with a pencil the inimitable attitude of the chestnuts as they bear up their canopy of leaves. Ever and again a little wind went by, and the nuts dropped all around me with a light and dull sound upon the sward. The noise was of a thin fall of great hailstones; but there went with it a cheerful human sentiment of an approaching harvest and farmers rejoicing in their gains. Looking up, I could see the brown nut peering through the husk which was already gaping; and between the stems the eye embraced an amphitheatre of hill, sunlit and green with leaves.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON: *Letters* (Charles Scribner's Sons).

**79. An example.**

Examine the arrangement of the foregoing description and compare it with the one given below. Are they alike in any one particular?

Anything more curious in the shape of a street vista than the view looking down one of these waterways can scarcely be found in Japan. Still as a mirror surface, the canal flows between high stone embankments supporting the houses,—houses of two or three stories all sparred out from the stonework so that their façades bodily overhang the water. They are huddled together in a way suggesting pressure from behind; and this appearance of squeezing and crowding is strengthened by the absence of regularity in design,—no house being exactly like another, but all having an indefinable Far-Eastern queerness,—a sort of racial character,—that gives the sensation of the very-far-away in place and time. They push out funny little galleries with balustrades; barred, projecting, glassless windows with elfish balconies under them, and rooflets over them like eyebrows; tiers of tiled and tilted awnings; and great eaves which, in certain hours, throw shadows down to the foundation. As most of the timber-work is dark,—either with age or staining,—the shadows look deeper than they really are. Within them you catch glimpses of balcony pillars, bamboo ladders from gallery to gallery, polished angles of joinery,—all kinds of jutting things. At intervals you can see mattings hanging out, and curtains of split bamboo, and cotton hangings with big white ideographs upon them; and all this is faithfully repeated upside down in the water. The colors ought to delight an artist,—umbers and chocolates and chestnut browns of old polished timber; warm yellows of mattings and bamboo screens; creamy tones of stuccoed surfaces; cool greys of tiling. . . . The last such vista I saw was bewitched by a spring haze. It was early morning. Two hundred yards from the bridge on which I stood, the house fronts began to turn blue; farther on, they were transparently

vapory; and yet farther, they seemed to melt away suddenly into the light,—a procession of dreams. I watched the progress of a boat propelled by a peasant in straw hat and straw coat,—like the peasants of the old picture books. Boat and man turned bright blue and then grey, and then, before my eyes,—glided into Nirvana. The notion of immateriality so created by that luminous haze was supported by the absence of sound; for these canal-streets are as silent as the streets of shops are noisy.

LAFCADIO HEARN: *Gleanings in Buddha Fields*  
(Houghton, Mifflin & Company).

### 80. Exercise.

Write a theme on one of the following subjects. You have a choice between narration and description. Whichever you choose, be vivid. If you write a description be sure first that you are interested in the subject and know why you are interested in it. Mention only those details which have helped to make that interest. Arrange your theme so that the reader can follow you easily and will himself be more and more interested until he reaches the end. Pick your words and phrase your sentences carefully so that you may express precisely what you feel and mean.

- A Delicatessen Shop.
- A Thanksgiving Dinner.
- A Walk in the Country.
- A Walk in the City.
- Shopping for a Cold Luncheon.
- Our Kitchen and the Cook.
- The First Christmas I Can Remember.
- A Story of My Mother's Girlhood.
- A Visit to My Father's Office.
- A Trip on the Water.

A Day of Interesting Discomfort.  
How I Made a Kite.  
A Mountain View.

Good instances of vivid description to which the teacher can refer the class are

Whittier's *Among the Hills*.  
Kipling's *Ballad of East and West*.  
Stevenson's *Travels with a Donkey*.  
Browning's *Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came*.  
Hawthorne's *A Rill from the Town Pump*.

The following is a good example of vivid description.

A corn-field in July is a hot place. The soil is hot and dry; the wind comes across the lazily murmuring leaves laden with a warm sickening smell drawn from the rapidly-growing, broad-flung banners of the corn. The sun, nearly vertical, drops a flood of dazzling light and heat upon the field over which the cool shadows run, only to make the heat seem the more intense.

Julia Peterson, faint with fatigue, was toiling back and forth between the corn-rows, holding the handles of the double-shovel corn-plough, while her little brother Otto rode the steaming horse. Her heart was full of bitterness, and her face flushed with heat, and her muscles aching with fatigue. The heat grew terrible. The corn came to her shoulders, and not a breath seemed to reach her, while the sun, nearing the noon mark, lay pitilessly upon her shoulders, protected only by a calico dress. The dust rose under her feet, and as she was wet with perspiration it soiled her till, with a woman's instinctive cleanliness, she shuddered. Her head throbbed dangerously. What matter to her that the kingbird pitched jovially from the maples to catch a wandering blue-bottle fly, that the robin was feeding its young, that the bobolink was singing? All these things, if she saw them, only threw her bondage to labor into greater relief.

Across the field, in another patch of corn, she could see her father—a big, gruff-voiced, wide-bearded Norwegian—at work also with a plough. The corn must be ploughed, and so she toiled on, the tears dropping from the shadow of the ugly sun-bonnet she wore. Her shoes, coarse and square-toed, chafed her feet; her hands, large and strong, were browned, or more properly burnt, on the backs by the sun. The horse's harness "creek-cracked," as he swung steadily and patiently forward, the moisture pouring from his sides, his nostrils distended.

HAMLIN GARLAND: *Main Travelled Roads.*

## CHAPTER V

### ON SENTENCES

#### 81. Introductory.

When a writer does not think what he is about he is likely to put down the first thought that comes into his head, add a second, then a third, and so on, stringing his ideas along just as they occur to him. At last he stops the sentence only because the ink on his pen is dry, or he thinks it is perhaps time for a period, or he is tired and wishes to rest his mind for a moment. This is the slovenly way in which Defoe must have written the following sentence. He began it and trusted to luck as to how it would come out. And it came out very badly.

At our first coming into the island we were terrified exceedingly with the sight of the barbarous people; whose figure was made more terrible to us than it really was, by the report we had of them from the seamen; but when we came to converse with them a while, we found they were not cannibals, as was reported, or such as would fall immediately upon us and eat us up; but they came and sat down by us, and wondered much at our clothes and arms, and made signs to give us some victuals, such as they had, which was only roots and plants dug out of the ground, for the present, but they brought us fowls and flesh afterwards, in good plenty.

The author of *Alice in Wonderland* has written a burlesque of a sentence of this sort in the following letter:

CH. CH., OXFORD, March 8, 1880.

MY DEAR ADA: (Is n't that your short name? "Adelaide" is all very well, but you see when one is *dreadfully* busy one has n't time to write such long words—particularly when it takes one half an hour to remember how to spell it—and even then one has to go and get a dictionary to see if one has spelt it right, and of course the dictionary is in another room, at the top of a high bookcase—where it has been for months and months, and has got all covered with dust—so one has to get a duster first of all, and nearly choke oneself in dusting it—and when one *has* made out at last which is dictionary and which is dust, even *then* there 's the job of remembering which end of the alphabet "A" comes—for one feels pretty certain it is n't in the *middle*—then one has to go and wash one's hands before turning over the leaves—for they 've got so thick with dust one hardly knows them by sight—and, as likely as not, the soap is lost, and the jug is empty, and there 's no towel, and one has to spend hours and hours in finding things—and perhaps after all one has to go off to the shop to buy a new cake of soap—so, with all this bother, I hope you won't mind my writing it short and saying "my dear Ada".) You said in your last letter you would like a likeness of me; so here it is, and I hope you will like it. I won't forget to call the next time but one I 'm in Wallington.

Your very affect friend,

LEWIS CARROLL.

## 82. On being definite.

"First know what you wish to do; then go ahead and do it" is the rule for writing sentences as it is for other actions in life. If you have some point to make, some idea to express, you will naturally make

it and stop, and your sentence will succeed in doing something in consequence. In the following paragraphs, each sentence has its own piece of work to accomplish; it carries the reader one step forward in understanding what the paragraph is for:

From immemorial time the shores of Japan have been swept at irregular intervals of centuries by enormous tidal waves—tidal waves caused by earthquakes or by submarine volcanic action. These awful sudden risings of the sea are called by the Japanese *tsunami*. The last one occurred on the evening of June 17, 1896, when a wave nearly two hundred miles long struck the northeastern provinces of Miyagi, Iwate and Aomori, wrecking whole districts and destroying nearly thirty thousand human lives. The story of Hamaguchi Gohei is the story of a like calamity which happened long before the era of Meiji, on another part of the Japanese coast.

The day had been oppressive; and in spite of a rising breeze there was still in the air that sort of heavy heat which, according to the experience of the Japanese peasant, at certain seasons precedes an earthquake. And presently an earthquake came. It was not strong enough to frighten anybody; but Hamaguchi, who had felt hundreds of shocks in his time, thought it was queer,—a long, slow, spongy motion. Probably it was but the after-tremor of some immense seismic action very far away. The house crackled and rocked gently several times: then all became still again.

LAFCADIO HEARN: *Gleanings in Buddha Fields*.

### 83. Length of sentences.

Short, sharp sentences are often effective. But a succession of them, all equally short and all formed alike, grows very monotonous. It reads like the primer. Take this for instance:



I am Rover. I live on a farm. Mark and Carl are my little masters. I stay in the barnyard most of the time. At night I watch the house. I see that no harm comes to my little masters.

All this sounds crude. Yet this is the way we are likely to write when we first realize that every sentence should have a point and keep to it. A skilful writer, however, can introduce a great many details as a means of bringing out one main idea. He knows how to use the other parts of his sentence to emphasize the chief part more clearly. Such a man can write long sentences that are, as we call them, units; as this one from Charles Lamb:

If, peradventure, Reader, it has been thy lot to waste the golden years of thy life—thy shining youth—in the irksome confinement of an office; to have thy prison days prolonged through middle age down to decrepitude and silver hairs, without hope of release or respite; to have lived to forget that there are such things as holidays or to remember them but as the prerogatives of childhood; then, and then only, will you be able to appreciate my deliverance.

LAMB: *Essays of Elia*.

The author's delight in deliverance is the one chief impression which this quotation leaves on the mind. Every paragraph should be a series of such impressions as clear and as simple as this. And for every chief impression there should be a separate sentence. Criticise the sentences on pages 34-35, beginning "So saying, he dashed into the midst," and concluding "but droves of sheep." Is every sentence a unit? Criticise the passage from Burroughs on pages 107-108. Is every sentence a unit?

**84. Subjects, predicates, and their modifiers.**

As we have seen in the first chapter of this book, most sentences contain a simple subject, which is ordinarily either a noun or a pronoun, and a simple predicate, which is always a verb; for example:

The band is playing.

Both the noun and the verb may be modified by single words called respectively adjectives and adverbs:

The *village* band is *not* playing.

Subject and predicate may be modified by groups of words called phrases:

The village band *of unhappy memory* is not playing *any longer*.

Or, they may be modified by groups of words which, because they have subjects and predicates of their own, are called clauses:

The village band of unhappy memory, *which used to keep you awake last year*, is not playing any longer in the public square, *for the people have forced it to disband*.

Phrases are of five sorts:

***Prepositional:***

In town; at home; by dint of much practice.

***Participial:***

Having doubled the numbers; growing tired; being beaten; living in hope.

*Infinitive :*

To speak the truth; to reach New York.

*Noun :*

Three miles distant; a great while ago;

*The Nominative Absolute :*

His bow broken at his feet.

Clauses may be introduced by pronouns or adverbs, as,

Which he bought; when he returned.

These varieties of modification give us a great many ways of changing the form of sentences. There are still three other forms. We may connect two simple statements by some such connectives as *and*, *but*, or *or* to form a compound sentence or to form a compound subject or a compound predicate.

John has declined but William will come.

John and Henry are here.

He either reads or studies all the time.

Write a compound sentence; a sentence with a compound subject; one with a compound predicate; one with a clause introduced by a pronoun; one with a clause introduced by an adverb; one with a participial phrase; one with a prepositional phrase; one with an infinitive phrase; one with the nominative absolute. (See Chapter II.)

**85. An exercise in dialogue.**

A writer who winds up every speech in a dialogue with *he said* or *she said* soon grows as monotonous as

a katydid. He can vary the monotony a little by using more specific words. Such as *replied*, *retorted*, *ejaculated*, *muttered*, *sighed*, *groaned*.

But he will need to do still more than this. He must have a vivid picture in his mind of the speakers, of the actions which accompany their talk and of the place where they are talking.

Scotch shepherd dogs drive and direct the sheep among the hills according to the master's signal below. In some parts of Scotland an annual contest is held in which the swiftness and intelligence of the dogs in doing this are put to the test. The following selection introduces two shepherds talking of such a contest. In the first few paragraphs notice how vividly the author presents the actions of the speakers. Note, too, how skilfully he introduces modifying phrases and clauses in describing them. From most of the selection all this part of the work has been omitted. Replace it with work of your own in which the scene shall be made vivid and the sentences be pleasantly varied.

The sun stared brazenly down on a gray farmhouse, lying long and low in the shadow of the Muir Pike; on the ruins of peel-tower and barmkyn, relics of the time of raids, it looked; on ranges of whitewashed outbuildings; on a goodly array of dark-thatched ricks.

In the stack-yard, behind the lengthy range of stables, two men were thatching. One lay sprawling on the crest of the rick, the other stood perched on a ladder at a lower level.

The latter, small, old, with shrewd nut-brown countenance, was Tammas Thornton, who had served the Moores of Kenmuir for more than half a century. The other, on top of the

stack, wrapped apparently in gloomy meditation, was Sam'l Todd. A solid Dalesman, he, with huge hands and hairy arms; about his face an uncomely aureole of stiff red hair; and on his features, deep-seated, an expression of resolute melancholy.

"Ay, the Gray Dogs, bless 'em!" the old man was saying. "Yo' canna beat 'em not nohow. Known 'em ony time this sixty year, I have, and niver knew a bad un yet. Not as I say, mind ye, as any on 'em cooms up to Rex, son o' Rally. Ah, he was a one, was Rex! We's never won Cup since his day."

"Nor niver shall agin, yo' may depend," said the other gloomily.

Tammas clucked irritably.

"G'long, Sam'l Todd! Yo' niver happy onless yo' makin' yo'self miser'ble. I niver see sich a chap. Niver win agin? Why, oor young Bob he'll mak' a right un, I tell yo', and I should know. Not as what he'll touch Rex, son o' Rally, mark ye! I'm niver sayin' so, Sam'l Todd. Ah, he was a one, was Rex! I could tell yo' a tale or two o' Rex. I mind me hoo——"

The big man interposed hurriedly.

"I've heard it afore, Tammas, I welly 'ave."

Tammas paused and looked angrily up.

"Yo've heard it afore, have yo', Sam'l Todd? And what have yo' heard afore?"

"Yo' stories, owd lad—yo' stories o' Rex, son o' Rally."

"Which on 'em?"

"All on 'em, Tammas, all on 'em—mony a time. I'm fair sick on 'em, Tammas, I welly am."

"I'll niver tell yo' a tale agin, Sam'l Todd, not if yo' was to go on yo' bended knees for't. Nay; it bain't no manner o' use talkin'. Niver agin, says I."

"I niver askt yo'."

"Nor it wouldna ha' bin no manner o' use if yo' had. I'll niver tell yo' a tale agin if I was to live to be a hundred."

"Yo'll not live to be a hundred, Tammas Thornton, nor near it."

"I'll live as long as some, I warrant. I'll live to see Cup back i' Kenmuir, as I said afore."

"If yo' do, Sam'l Todd niver spake a true word. Nay, nay, lad. Yo're owd, yo're wambly, your time's near run or I'm the more mistook."

"For mussy's sake hold yo' tongue, Sam'l Todd! It's clack-clack all day——"

ALFRED OLLIVANT: *Bob, Son of Battle* (Double-day, Page & Company).

### 86. A study in description.

Read the first scene of *As You Like It*. Write a description of this part of the play as it would appear to one who could see it all from a neighboring hill, but is too far away to hear any sound of it.

In the passage from the entrance of Oliver to the entrance of Dennis, introduce the explanatory phrases *he said, he muttered, etc.*, with descriptive words, phrases, and clauses.

### 87. An exercise in dialogue.

Write an imaginary dialogue between two characters you have read about in books, using the explanatory phrases *he said, he exclaimed, etc.*, with modifying words, phrases, and clauses as in the preceding section. Good characters for this purpose are Rip Van Winkle and Ichabod Crane. In writing dialogue, make it crisp and to the point; use colloquial not formal language; make the actions of the speakers vivid by the way in which you describe their manner of talking and gesticulating, and don't let them bore each other by talking too much about what sort of

people they are. Remember, too, that a dialogue is a story. It should carry us on steadily to some point.<sup>1</sup>

### 88. Parallel construction.

In which form would you write the following sentences:

1. I came; (I saw) (the facts were carefully observed by me); (victory perched upon my banners) (I conquered).

2. Johnson was a man of strong passions, (unbending spirit) (you could not bend his spirit) (his temper was violent) (violet temper), as poor as a church mouse, and (no church dignitary could be prouder) (as proud as the proudest of church dignitaries).

3. He now sat on the ground; his elbows on his knees (his head resting beneath his clenched fists) (resting his head between his clenched fists); (his eyes fixed on the earth with an expression of sadness) (while he fixed his eyes on the earth with an expression of sadness); (and apparently ruminating bitterly) (and bitter rumination).

4. He had good reason to believe that the delay was not an accident (accidental) but premeditated, and (for supposing) (to suppose) that the fort though strong both by art and (naturally) (by nature) would be forced by the treachery of the governor and the (indolent) (indolence of the) general to capitulate within a week.

### 89. Balanced sentences.

The following sentence makes a definite point very clearly. But it is awkward. As we read it, it seems as if a part had been lopped off; it seems one-sided.

<sup>1</sup> For this exercise, the teacher can probably best determine the subject, for in almost every case it can be selected from literature which the class has recently studied.

Our designers will produce a pattern coat, 38-inch chest, so made that it will fit every man in the lot and not only fit, but look fit.

A sentence pleases us better if one part balances in our minds over against another, so that we feel a pleasant sense of proportion throughout. We must be natural; we must be simple; we must avoid writing poetry and calling it prose, but we can manage our sentences so that they shall seem symmetrical. Take for instance this quotation from Robert Louis Stevenson's *Travels with a Donkey*. It is much pleasanter to read aloud than the quotation about the coat.

A tent, above all, for a solitary traveller, is troublesome to pitch and troublesome to strike again; and even on the march it forms a conspicuous feature in your baggage. A sleeping-sack, on the other hand, is always ready. You have only to get into it; it serves a double purpose—a bed by night, a portmanteau by day, and it does not advertise your intention of camping out to every passer-by.

Make the following changes in the sentences above and see if the quotation is improved.

Omit *above all*.

For *traveller* substitute *camper*.

Omit the second *troublesome*.

For *even on the march* substitute *when you are moving*.

For *feature of* substitute *element in*.

For a *sleeping-sack on the other hand*, substitute *But a sleeping-sack*.

In trying to make their sentences nicely balance, some writers fall into sing-song as in this sentence from Shakespeare:



I know not how I shall offend in dedicating my unpolished lines to your lordship, nor how the world will censure me for choosing so strong a prop to support so weak a burden, only if your honor seem but pleased, I account myself highly praised and vow to take advantage of all idle hours till I have honored you with some graver labor.

It is hard to say what is necessary to make a sentence both natural and pleasant to the ear. But the following sentences seem to the authors of this book, at any rate, to be successful.

At last the bells ceased, and with their note, the sun withdrew. And the rest of the time the rain kept coming in squirts and the wind in squalls until one's heart grew weary of such fitful, scolding weather.

Compare the selection from Dr. Brunton, pages 90-92, and that from Mr. Cook, page 75. In which selection are the sentences better balanced? Give reasons for your opinion.

#### 90. Periodic and loose sentences.

The two sentences below are taken from Charles Lamb's *Praise of Chimney Sweepers*. In the first of these two, it is impossible to stop anywhere before the end and reach a point where the sentence makes complete sense. Such a sentence is called *periodic*. In the second sentence, we may stop before the close and find that we have a complete subject, a complete predicate, and completed sense. Such a sentence is called *loose*.

In one of the state-beds at Arundel Castle, a few years since—under a ducal canopy—(that seat of the Howards

is an object of curiosity to visitors chiefly for its beds, in which the late duke was especially a connoisseur)—encircled with curtains of delicate crimson, with starry coronets inwoven—folded between a pair of sheets—whiter and softer than the lap where Venus lulled Ascanius—was discovered by chance after all methods of search had failed, at noon-day, fast asleep, a lost chimney-sweeper. The little creature, having somehow confounded his passage among the intricacies of those lordly chimneys, by some unknown aperture had alighted upon this magnificent chamber; and tired with his tedious exploration, was unable to resist the delicious invitement to repose, which he there saw exhibited; so creeping between the sheets very quietly, laid his black head upon the pillow, and slept like a young Howard.

A periodic sentence may be so awkward as to be ludicrous. Mr. Genung in his *Practical Rhetoric* gives an instance of such a one from a newspaper:

Shocked by the suicide and treachery of a professed friend, embarrassed by the broken condition of the bank, maddened by the wild clamor of an excited community, stung by the harsh reports of the New York papers, dreading lest by reason of some technicality his honor would be impeached, having borne the terrible strain for four weary days, in a moment, without the slightest premeditation, frenzied and insane, he committed the deed.

Here, on the other hand, is a periodic sentence that is good. It is natural; it keeps our curiosity alert until the close, it ends at the strongest point.

As far as I am acquainted with modern architecture I am aware of no streets which, in simplicity and manliness of style, or general breadth and brightness of aspect, equal those of the new town of Edinburgh.

Loose sentences may be very ludicrous, as we have seen on page 118; but they may also be very good. Here is one, for instance, which would have been very good indeed, if it had stopped at *woods*. It has a point, it keeps to it, and as far as that word, it grows more and more interesting:

It was very pleasant, when I stayed late in town, to launch myself into the night, especially if it was dark and tempestuous, and set sail from some bright village parlor or lecture room, with a bag of rye or Indian meal upon my shoulder, for my snug harbor in the woods, having made all tight without and withdrawn under hatches with a merry crew of thoughts, leaving only my outer man at the helm, or even tying up the helm when it was plain sailing.

#### 91. Exercise.

Pick out the periodic sentences in the following list. What are good? What poor? Pick out the loose. Show why they are loose. What are good? What poor?

1. "Have you heard the news of Bill Trimmings?"

"What news is that?"

"He died, almost."

2. I have stretched my legs up Tottenham-hill to overtake you, hoping your business may occasion you toward Ware, whither I am going this fine, fresh, May morning.

3. At this time, when I was a young man of twenty-three or thereabouts, so terrible a pestilence broke out that in Rome every day many thousands died of it.

4. We were sitting—Miss Matty and I—much as usual; she in the blue chintz easy-chair, with her back to the light, and her knitting in her hand; I reading aloud the *St. James Chronicle*.

5. All this time my impressions of Salem witchcraft had been derived from two absorbing days that I had passed with Mr. Upham's books, some years ago.

6. Literature, then, we may perhaps define as the lasting expression in words of the meaning of life.

7. As for Florence, it has been gayer than ordinary the last month, being one round of balls and entertainments, occasioned by the arrival of a great Milanese lady; for the only thing the Italians shine in is their reception of strangers.

8. Of large frame and bulk, fierce expression and harsh voice, we seem almost to see this monster.

9. He answered laughingly.

10. Laughingly he answered.

11. He was both wise and virtuous.

12. It is not easy to see why a bargee should ever die.

13. A bargee should never die, so far as I see.

14. For our era at least the boundaries of human knowledge have been irrevocably fixed.

15. The boundaries of human knowledge have been irrevocably fixed for our era at least.

16. He was considerate, so he hurt no one's feelings.

17. He was so considerate that he hurt no one's feelings.

18. A barge or two went by, laden with hay.

Pick out the periodic sentences in the selection from Burroughs, pages 107-108; pick out the periodic sentences in the selection from Lafcadio Hearn on page 113.

## 92. On sentences that have snap.

"End your sentences with words that deserve distinction." This is the advice which Mr. Barrett Wendell gives in his *English Composition*, and it is good advice to follow. But what are the words that deserve distinction? They are those which will help the reader furthest along in the story you are telling

or the explanation you are making. In this selection from Oliver Goldsmith, for instance, note the concluding phrase of each sentence. Each sentence ends at its strongest point.

The happiest silly fellow I ever knew was of the number of those good-natured creatures that are said to do no harm to any but themselves. Whenever he fell into any misery he usually called it *Seeing Life*. If his head was broke by a chairman, or his pocket picked by a sharper, he comforted himself by imitating the Hibernian dialect of the one, or the more fashionable cant of the other. Nothing came amiss to him. His inattention to money matters had incensed his father to such a degree, that all the intercession of friends in his favor was fruitless. The old gentleman was on his deathbed. The whole family, and Dick among the number, gathered around him. "I leave my second son, Andrew," said the expiring miser, "my whole estate, and desire him to be frugal." Andrew in a sorrowful tone, as is usual on these occasions, prayed Heaven to prolong his life and health to enjoy it himself. "I recommend Simon, my third son, to the care of his elder brother, and leave him beside four thousand pounds." "Ah! father," cried Simon (in great affliction to be sure), "may Heaven give you life and health to enjoy it yourself." At last turning to poor Dick, "As for you, you have always been a sad dog; you'll never come to any good; you'll never be rich; I'll leave you a shilling to buy an halter." "Ah! father," cries Dick without any emotion, "may Heaven give you life and health to enjoy it yourself."

Examine the selection from Dr. Brunton, pages 90-92. Note the phrase with which each sentence closes.

### 93. Exercise.

Write a paragraph on one of the following sub-

jects. Take especial pains with your sentences, so that they shall be definite and to the point.

A Ride in a Trolley Car.

Following a Fire.

A Mysterious Sound and What Came of It.

Missing the Boat.

Missing the Train.

#### 94. An explanatory paragraph.

Write an explanatory paragraph on one of the following subjects. Take especial pains with your sentences, as in the last exercise.

1. Why I Think ——— the Best Writer of Stories.
2. Why We Need a School Paper.
3. How a Bank Account is Kept.
4. On Some Character in Fiction.
5. The News Dealer in Our Neighborhood.

#### 95. Exercise.

Write a paragraph summarizing the story of the railway trip on pages 42-44, taking especial pains with your sentences.

Write a paragraph summarizing the selection from Dr. Brunton, on pages 90-92, taking especial pains with your sentences.

#### 96. Incoherent sentences.

The following sentences are taken from advertisements, themes, newspapers, and books. Rearrange them. Put close together the ideas you think the reader should keep together; keep apart what you wish kept apart.

1. Gorton's Cod Fish Makes Strong Men and Women Without Bones.

2. We had some worms in a tomato-can with sharp edges on which I cut my fingers for bait.

3. The mouse gained admittance through one of the pupils, who brought it for a zoology specimen, and was placed in a glass jar on the window sill.

4. The lawn had occasional trees for protection from the fiercest rays of the Sun, some of which dropped delicious apples for their refreshment.

5. On the door-steps sit the three children with their rounded fat faces and big eyes, each waiting in turn for the spoonful of bread and milk.

6. Three men met us with their baggage on their backs going in search of a suitable place to pitch a tent.

7. We crossed mountains on the backs of mules ten thousand feet high.

8. In an address in honor of the unveiling of a monument of the Emperor Frederick, the Burgomaster referred to the model of the Admiral's ship of the first German fleet now in that building, a fleet which was subsequently sold at auction.

In the following sentences the writers have forgotten what they have said before they have finished their sentences. As a consequence they either repeat or contradict themselves. How can the sentences be corrected?

9. It is to be hoped that in the meantime and until further notice that no medicine be given the patient.

10. Do you think that if I work hard that I can become a writer?

11. In writing we must carefully connect our ideas together.

12. It is said that many a one has gone out of the world no wiser than when they came into it.

13. While sitting in my room just after lunch the fire-bell sounded.

14. All they could see of the invisible one were his boots.

15. It must be very painful to suffer so intensely.

#### 97. Coherent sentences.

*Don't waste words.* To try to put all we have to say into as few words as possible, sharpens our wits and improves our style. Writing is like boxing; the swifter the blow we drive, the sharper the impression we make. "I forgot it" says more than "I forgot all about it." "He was disgusted" says more than "He was very much disgusted." "I could not bend my arm" is stronger than "I was unable to bend my arm." "Where are you going to?" is not so clean and crisp as "Where are you going?" When we are thoroughly in earnest, thoroughly awake, we are always concise; every word counts.

#### 98. Exercise.

Rewrite the following sentences as simply as possible.

1. What sort of a<sup>1</sup> house does he live in?
2. I saw a little pool of green looking water.
3. Such a man does not deserve the name of a gentleman.
4. Let us glance briefly at the real facts of the situation.
5. I have got a cold together with fever.
6. There is nothing which angers a man so much as being considered by other people as a helpless fellow about taking care of his own personal affairs.
7. I accept of your hospitality.
8. They were both alike in being irritable.
9. What kind of a<sup>1</sup> man are you?

<sup>1</sup> Not a logical use of *a*.



10. He is not very sympathetic, but yet I think I can get a subscription from him.
11. We must disassociate athletics from professionalism.
12. This is a preventative.
13. This machine will serve me equally as well.
14. He showed great equanimity of mind.
15. I must be invited before I attend.
16. It will cost more than you think for.
17. She has got <sup>1</sup> a Roman nose.
18. In so far as he could he guarded her from imposition.
19. She was a widow woman.
20. No book that I remember of was ever printed backwards.
21. This is more preferable to that.

**99. Never give your reader a chance to misunderstand you.**

Words that may mean one thing or may mean another never satisfy a writer who is determined to write well. The more careless or stupid a reader is the more pleasure we can get in compelling him to understand us perfectly. Workmanlike sentences are always unmistakable. They never suggest two possible meanings. They force the reader to see precisely what we mean.

**100. Exercise.**

Rewrite the following sentences in words that cannot be misunderstood. Any sentence which can be interpreted equally well in two different ways you will

<sup>1</sup> *got* is misused here. It should be used only to mean *to obtain*, *to procure*, and in a few idiomatic phrases. Never use it where it adds nothing to the sentence. In England, however, it is accepted as good usage. See the selection, p. 90.

need to replace with two sentences, each unmistakable in meaning.

1. She could not hear a word of the conversation going on about her.
2. He had a certain knowledge of the subject.
3. The love of a horse is not as strong as the love of a child.
4. Dr. Johnson told him that he was in danger of losing his friends.
5. When buying expensive things, the clerks at Brown and Company's are always kind to me.
6. Samuel Upham's father died before he was born.
7. I can't find one of my books.
8. Have you heard how old Mrs. Brown is?
9. I did not know that you had stayed in town until yesterday.
10. I said that he was a liar, it is true, and I am sorry for it.
11. Thank you for your book. I shall lose no time in reading it.
12. I have enjoyed your book. I lie, Sir, I assure you, under a sense of obligation.
13. He appeared to have more faith in us than his friend.
14. I think that you will find my Latin exercise, at all events, as good as my cousin's.
15. John Keats, the second of four children, like Chaucer and Spenser, was born in London.

#### **101. Misplace no words.**

In a well written sentence every word should fit; it should seem to grow from what comes just before it into what comes just after it, and the sentence as a whole should take us without a snag or break from the beginning to the point it tries to make at the close. Such sentences we call coherent, for every word co-

heres, that is, sticks closely to the word next to it. Prepositional phrases are sometimes thrown at the beginning of the sentence, although they modify the verb, but adverbs are usually near the verb they modify, verbs near their subjects, adjectives near their nouns, and pronouns near their antecedents. Throughout, the ideas which should be closely associated are put close to each other. In coherent sentences we have "proper words in proper places."

We can never be sure that a sentence has expressed just what we wish to say until we re-read it. Revise your sentences carefully. In doing so ask yourself these questions:

1. Have I wasted words?
2. Can my sentence or any part of it be misunderstood?
3. Have I used words in a natural order?
4. Have I kept close together the words that should be closely associated?
5. Are the adjectives near enough to the nouns they modify? the adverbs to the verbs? the pronouns to their antecedents?

#### 102. An exercise.

Insert each of the following phrases *in the fittest place* in the sentence beneath it. Give your reasons for your choice of position.

1. *with whom I spoke*

Those     ^     were perfectly sweet tempered     ^     with what  
I can only call a holy cheerfulness in air and conversation.

2. *perhaps*

I might ^ get a meal ^ but that was all.

3. *to the South*

But if things ^ had grown better ^ it was still desolate and inclement near at hand. (See Sentences, Section 84.)

4. *in nine cases out of ten*

But the people of the inn ^ show themselves friendly and considerate ^ . (See Sentences, Section 91.)

5. *at last*

We struck ^ into a wide, white high-road ^ carpeted with noiseless dust.

6. *the next moment.*

And ^ the breeze had gone by ^ and in all the valley nothing moved except our travelling feet.

7. *when I came back to the inn for a bit of breakfast*

^ the landlady was in the kitchen combing her daughter's hair ^ .

8. *like toothache*

My arm ached ^ from perpetual beating ^ .

9. *without so much as raising her head*

The mother ^ followed ^ .

10. *as soon as the kettle boiled*

I made porridge ^ and coffee ^ .

## 103. On emphasis in sentences.

Notice the following sentences. They begin well; they end well.

Obstinate and unruly as he was, he could not face an angered father.

"This," said my father, "is the way you respond to my generosity."

In the dusk he could barely discern the outlines of the carriage.

His anger he might control, but not his selfishness.

Rewrite the following sentences, so that the phrases in italics shall stand at the beginning; the phrases in small capitals at the close. In doing this, take pains to keep like things together, unlike apart.

1. We had been landed *by two* at the mine, the buggy was gone again, and we were left to OUR OWN REFLECTIONS and the basket of cold provender until Hanson should arrive.

2. I suppose *once* the stream ran splashing down the whole length of the canyon, but now its head waters had been tapped by the shaft at Silverado, and it wandered sunless AMONG THE JOINTS OF THE MOUNTAIN for a great part of its course.

3. A Californian vineyard, *one of man's outposts in the wilderness*, has its OWN features.

4. I have *rarely* been conscious of a stranger thrill than when I raised THAT SINGULAR CREATURE from the stones.

5. To TASTE THE AIR was good.

6. There was *another Scotchman*, a resident who, douce, serious, religious man, drove me all about the valley and took as much interest in me AS IF I HAD BEEN HIS SON, for the mere love of the common country.

#### 104. Exercise.

Write a theme on one of the following subjects. Look especially to the arrangement of your sentences according to the directions given above.

1. An Experience with a Servant.
2. Selling Tickets.

3. An Exciting Incident at School.
4. Halloween Night.
5. A Visit to a Relative.
6. An Important Telegram and What Came of It.
7. A Deserted House.

#### 105. A study in sentences.

Study the forms of sentences in the following passage, and note how effective they are.

I had no repugnance then—why should I now have?—to those little, lawless, azure-tintured grotesques, that, under the notion of men and women, float about, uncircumscribed by any element, in that world before perspective—a china tea-cup. I like to see my old friends—whom distance cannot diminish—figuring up in the air (so they appear to our optics), yet on terra firma still—for so we must in courtesy interpret that speck of deeper blue, which the decorous artist, to prevent absurdity, hath made to spring up beneath their sandals.

I love the men with women's faces, and the women, if possible, with still more womanish expressions. Here is a young and courtly Mandarin, handing tea to a lady from a salver—two miles off. See how distance seems to set off respect! And here the same lady, or another—for likeness is identity on tea-cups—is stepping into a little fairy boat, moored on the hither side of this calm garden river, with a dainty mincing foot, which in a right angle of incidence (as angles go in our world) must infallibly land her in the midst of a flowery mead—a furlong off on the other side of the same strange stream! Farther on—if far or near can be predicated of their world—see horses, trees, pagodas, dancing the hays. Here—a cow and rabbit couchant, and coextensive—so objects show, seen through the lucid atmosphere of fine Cathay.

From the essay on "Old China" in CHARLES  
LAMB'S *Essays of Elia*.

Poverty is a comparative thing. Its poor rents and comings-in are soon summed up and told. Its pretences to property are almost ludicrous. Its pitiful attempts to save excite a smile. Every scornful companion can weigh his trifle-bigger purse against it. Poor man reproaches poor man in the streets with impolitic mention of his condition, his own being a shade better, while the rich pass by and jeer at both. No rascally comparative insults a Beggar, or thinks of weighing purses with him. He is not in the scale of comparison. He is not under the measure of property. He confessedly hath none, any more than a dog or a sheep. No one twitteth him with ostentation above his means. No one accuses him of pride, or upbraideth him with mock humility. None jostle with him for the wall, or pick quarrels for precedency. No wealthy neighbor seeketh to eject him from his tenement. No man sues him. No man goes to law with him. If I were not the independent gentleman that I am, rather than I would be a retainer to the great, a led captain, or a poor relation, I would choose, out of the delicacy and true greatness of my mind, to be a Beggar.

Rags, which are the reproach of poverty, are the Beggar's robes, and graceful insignia of his profession, his tenure, his full dress, the suit in which he is expected to show himself in public. He is never out of the fashion, or limpeth awkwardly behind it. He is not required to put on court mourning. He weareth all colors, fearing none. His costume hath undergone less change than the Quakers. He is the only man in the universe who is not obliged to study appearances. The ups and downs of the world concern him no longer. He alone continueth in one stay. The price of stock or land affecteth him not. The fluctuations of agricultural or commercial prosperity touch him not, or at worst but change his customers. He is not expected to become bail or surety for any one. No man troubleth him with questioning his religion or politics. He is the only free man in the universe.

CHARLES LAMB: *Essays of Elia*.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE CHOICE OF WORDS

#### 106. Introductory.

The modern dictionary contains something like two hundred thousand words. Many of these are used only among the members of a special profession or the students of a special science. Such words are called technical. Many have had their day and have dropped out of the living language. Such words are called obsolete. Still others should never have been invented; there was never any need for them. Those that are left are, at a guess, forty thousand, every one ready for the man who knows enough to use it.

Some famous people, it is said, have read the dictionary through, but dictionaries are very long, and, with the exception of the very longest, the information they give about any one word is very scanty. How then can we educate ourselves to use words well? There is only one way. We must train our eyes and ears to be as alert as possible, and we must always express ourselves as accurately as we can in language that we think will seem clear, natural, and pleasant to our hearers.

#### 107. Observation.

First we need to *observe*; to notice the things about



us and find out their names; to notice the feelings people have and what they call them; to note attentively how people use words, how they pronounce and spell them, what they mean by them, and how they arrange them into phrases.

#### 108. Selection.

In the second place, we need to *select*. Mere imitation never makes a good speaker or writer. From the forms and usages which we hear or read we must pick out those which will help us to think and express ourselves clearly and precisely. Words which misrepresent us or fail to represent us at all or encourage us to think loosely and carelessly can never be good speech. On the other hand, a man who has learned to think accurately and precisely has gone a long way toward using words well.

#### 109. Good taste.

In the third place, we must cultivate *tact*, *good sense*, and *good fellowship*. If we forget everything in our intention to be always right ourselves we shall become very narrow and our speech will always show it. After all there are at least two persons concerned in every speech, and one of them is the person spoken to. We need to consider him. (1) We mustn't waste his time. If he is hurrying for the doctor, we needn't keep him while we say, "Your most *approximately straight* course is the road on your left." (2) We must remember, too, that he is living in the twentieth century. It won't do to talk to him in lan-

guage that has long since gone out of fashion; to say, "Sirrah, I'll be with you betimes," as if we were a romantic novel. (3) We must consider his feelings. The older a man is the less excuse there is for addressing him as "Old Man." (4) We must remember that words have different associations for different people. To a child who has just been whipped, it would be unkind to call out, "Come out in my boat; there's a spanking breeze on the bay." (5) We must think of words not only as sense but sounds as well, and sometimes very awkward sounds at that. No skilful writer would ever entitle a romantic story "A Moonlight Midnight." In brief, to use words well, we must use our eyes, our ears, our wits at their keenest, our good sense, and our tact.

#### 110. Exercise.

Give illustrations of your own of each of the five points mentioned just above.

#### 111. Pretentious words.

There are almost as many ways of using words as there are sorts of people in the world. Pretentious people, for instance, must use a high-sounding vocabulary. It gives them a chance to magnify their own importance, to look big in their own eyes. They never forget themselves long enough to observe carefully what goes on about them. They never seek to see clearly, think sensibly, and express themselves as simply as they can. What they wish are words that will appear to mean a great deal, whether they mean much of anything or not.

All of us have to be on our guard at times not to become pretentious in our writing. It may be that we have an article to send to a paper or a theme to hand in to a teacher, and our ideas don't seem important enough to show in public. Then we are tempted to dress them up for the occasion. In the *Biglow Papers*, James Russell Lowell tells how the newspaper reporters used to do this forty years ago. They have grown very much simpler and more straightforward since that time, but this is the list as Lowell made it:

## REPORTERS' STYLE.

Was launched into eternity.

When the fatal noose was adjusted about the neck of the unfortunate victim of his own unbridled passions.

A vast concourse was assembled to witness.

Disastrous conflagration.

The conflagration extended its devastating career.

Edifice consumed.

The progress of the devouring element was arrested.

Individual was precipitated.

A valuable horse attached to a vehicle driven by J. S., in the employment of J. B., collided with.

## SIMPLE STYLE.

Was hanged.

When the halter was put around his neck.

A great crowd came to see.

Great fire.

The fire spread.

House burned.

The fire was got under.

Man fell.

A horse and wagon ran against.

The infuriated animal.

The frightened horse.

Called into requisition the services of the family physician.

Sent for the doctor.

The chief magistrate of the metropolis in well-chosen and eloquent language, frequently interrupted by the plaudits of the surging multitude, officially tendered the hospitalities.

The mayor of the city in a short speech welcomed.

I shall, with your permission, beg leave to offer some brief observations.

I shall say a few words.

Commenced his rejoinder.

Began his answer.

Tendered him a banquet.

Asked him to dine.

One of those omnipresent characters who, as if in pursuance of some previous arrangement, are certain to be encountered in the vicinity when an accident occurs, ventured the suggestion.

A bystander advised.

He deceased, he passed out of existence, his spirit quitted its earthly habitation, winged its way to eternity, shook off its burden, etc.

He died.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL: *The Biglow Papers*  
(Houghton, Mifflin & Company).

**112. An example of simplicity.**

Ideas are never better for being dressed up in this way. On the contrary, to improve our ideas we should constantly try to make the expression of them more direct, more straightforward, more concise; we must use our eyes more keenly, put our minds on what we see, be more honest with ourselves, and say what we think.

The following letter from President Lincoln to Major General Hooker shows how well simple words will serve a man even in a great emergency:

I have placed you at the head of the Army of the Potomac. Of course I have done this upon what appear to me to be sufficient reasons, and yet I think it best for you to know that there are some things in regard to which I am not quite satisfied with you. I believe you to be a brave and skillful soldier, which of course I like. I also believe you do not mix politics with your profession, in which you are right. You have confidence in yourself, which is a valuable if not an indispensable quality. You are ambitious, which, within reasonable bounds, does good rather than harm; but I think that during General Burnside's command of the army you have taken counsel of your ambition and thwarted him as much as you could, in which you did a great wrong to the country and to a most meritorious and honorable brother officer. I have heard, in such a way as to believe it, of your recently saying that both the army and the government needed a dictator. Of course, it was not for this, but in spite of it, that I have given you the command. Only those generals who gain successes can set up dictators. What I now ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship. The government will support you to the utmost of its ability, which is neither more nor less than it has done and will do for all commanders. I much fear that the spirit which you have aided to infuse

into the army of criticising their commander and withhold confidence from him, will now turn upon you. I shall assist you so far as I can to put it down. Neither you nor Napoleon, if he were alive again, could get any good out of an army while such a spirit prevails in it. And now beware of rashness. Beware of rashness, but with energy and sleepless vigilance go forward and gain us victories.

Yours very truly,

A. LINCOLN.

### 113. Exercise.

Rewrite the following sentences as simply as possible:

I anticipated some difficulty in discovering my destination, but I encountered an individual who in response to my query informed me that the gentleman I was in search of was located a mile farther on in an unpretentious residence of yellow brick. *En route*, I witnessed an altercation between two dogs, but except for this I experienced nothing unusual.

Yesterday evening I endeavored to pursue a fire-engine while it was hastening to a conflagration, as I am always one to augment the crowd on such occasions; but I quickly relinquished the endeavor when I arrived at an ascent in the road.

### 114. Exercise.

The following words in the left-hand column can be used unpretentiously when they are used with precision. Look up their most restricted meanings in a good dictionary, and put each word, correctly used, into a sentence.

advent	is not equivalent to	coming
aggravate	" " " "	annoy
anticipate	" " " "	expect
calculate	" " " "	believe, think, or suppose

citizen	is not equivalent to	man or person
decimate	" " " "	inflict a severe loss
		on
invest in	" " " "	pay for
limited	" " " "	small
loom	" " " "	appear
partake of	" " " "	eat
residence	" " " "	house
unique	" " " "	unusual
witness	" " " "	see
gentleman <sup>1</sup>	" " " "	man
lady <sup>1</sup>	" " " "	woman

### 115. Some common errors.

Do not use

calculated	for	likely
commence	"	begin
constitutional	"	walk
donate	"	give
eventuate	"	turn out; come to
		pass
loan	"	lend

<sup>1</sup> Every one must determine for himself what are the essentials of a gentleman or of a lady. Are they chiefly a matter of money? of airs? of education? of instinctive consideration for others and discretion regarding one's self? of birth? of social position? As it is a difficult question to decide, we shall do best not to announce our decision any oftener than necessary. It is wise not to emphasize the fact that men and women are or are not gentlemen or ladies, unless the fact is essential to the point we are trying to make, the story we are trying to tell. The terms *men* and *women* are good terms to use, except when their use will seem snobbish, and they will seldom seem snobbish except to those who are snobbish themselves. Any one with the instincts of a gentleman will wish to be considered first a man; any one worthy to be counted lady-like will be still prouder to be called womanly. There is of course no more reason for speaking of a saleslady than of a *fire gentleman* or a *congress gentleman*.

materialize	for	turn out; take shape
in the near future	"	soon
orate	"	speak
resurrect	"	revive
transpire	"	happen

Calculated may be used in such sentences as "I have *calculated* my probable expenses," and "This slander, nicely *calculated* to injure me, failed of its purpose."

Constitutional may be used in such phrases as a *Constitutional* Government; *constitutional* exercise.

Loan may be used as a noun.

#### 116. A note on "We."

Pretentious writers sometimes fall into the habit of using *we* for *I*. A writer may use the plural of course, where he intends to include his readers with himself, as in,

If we wish a good school paper, we must all turn in and help.

An editor may use *we* when he intends to represent not simply his own opinions but those of the staff of editors, or of the paper as a whole, as in,

We urge our readers to contribute stories and poems, particularly poems, to our columns.

A person should not use *we* for *I*, however, simply because he is a writer, or even because he is so important a person as an editor. This is the error which



once led a woman into beginning an editorial article with the clause, "When we were a little girl."

### 117. Precision.

A number of characters in fiction are famous for their misuse of words. One of these, Mrs. Malaprop, dresses in the height of fashion, puts on all the airs of a superior person, and lays down the law as to what goes on in good society. But she is quite satisfied to make wild guesses as to the meanings of words. *Geometry* and *geography*, *supercilious* and *superficial*, *contiguous* and *contagious*, *reprehend* and *apprehend* sound pretty much alike to her ears and she freely uses one for the other. With all her great pretensions, she thinks like a sloven.

Lady Froth in Congreve's play of *The Double Dealer* not only is a lady of fashion; she aspires to be literary as well, and reads her poems triumphantly to all her acquaintances. But all her assumptions of wit and elegance only make her ridiculous, for she never realizes that true wit and elegance consist in saying and doing the appropriate thing in the appropriate way.

Mrs. Partington is one of the best of New England housekeepers. Her medicine chest is at every one's service; her cooking is known throughout the county; her house is as neat as wax; her cheery self is welcome wherever she goes. In all these matters she is the soul of neatness, thoroughness, alertness, and good sense. But as soon as she tries to handle words all these qualities desert her. Nothing would have shocked

Mrs. Partington more than to see a kitchen managed by the sort of guess-work by which she manages her vocabulary.

Sancho Panza is a lazy day-dreamer. He would much rather imagine the remarkable things he is going to be and to do ten years hence than take pains about the thing he must do in some fashion right away. It is said that one afternoon he was sitting by the roadside and describing to the mad knight Don Quixote a princess he pretended to have seen along the way. "Her damsels and she," said Sancho Panza, "are all one glow of gold, all bunches of pearls, all diamonds, all rubies, all cloth of brocade of more than ten borders; with their hair loose on their shoulders like so many sunbeams playing with the wind; and moreover they come mounted on three piebald cackneys, the finest sight ever you saw." "Hackneys, you mean, Sancho," said Don Quixote. "There is not much difference between cackneys and hackneys," said Sancho; "but no matter what they come on, there they are, the finest ladies one could wish for."

There are a great many people like Sancho who belong to what we might call the "cackney brigade." If we are to avoid the habits of the sloven and the slattern in our use of English, we must keep our attention alert to observe minute differences in pronunciation and nice distinctions in meaning. We must be careful not to let the similarities in sound between *precipitous* and *precipitate*, *unkempt* and *unkept*, *affect* and *effect*, *accept* and *except*, *tracts* and *tracks* confuse us. We must look out for the small words,

so that we can distinguish between *in* and *into*, and know when we should use *by* and when *with*, when *from* and when *of*. We shall need to observe the distinction between words that seem so similar in meaning as *majority* and *plurality*, *centre* and *middle*, *shall* and *will*, *continual* and *continuous*.

Perhaps the most slovenly habits of speech are in the use of such words as *while* and *so*. *So* is a difficult word to use correctly, *while* in careful speech means *during the time that* or *as long as*; but a lazy talker finds the misuse of them a great convenience when he wishes to string a number of clauses together in the following fashion:

Papa is going to come home to-morrow and he is going to bring Jack with him and he always wants me to dress well, while I haven't got a thing to wear and I can't borrow anything so I suppose there is no use doing anything about it.

### 118. Exercise.

Put each of the following words, correctly used, into a sentence.

#### VERBS.

accept

affect

allow

allude to

appreciate

behave<sup>1</sup>bring<sup>2</sup>

except

effect

think

refer to

fetch; carry

<sup>1</sup> Behave does not mean misbehave; it does not mean behave well. It means simply *behave*.

<sup>2</sup> A thing is brought when it is carried to the speaker or to the one addressed. We may say, for instance, *Will you bring*

can I? <sup>1</sup>  
 claim  
 compare to  
 demean  
 dispense  
 don't  
 expect  
 experience  
 fix  
 learn  
 located  
 set <sup>2</sup>  
 stop

may I? <sup>1</sup>  
 assert  
 compare with  
  
 dispense with  
 doesn't  
 suspect, think  
 notice  
 repair, (damage)  
 teach  
 situated  
 sit  
 stay

### 119. Exercise.

Put each of the following words, correctly used, into a sentence.

#### NOUNS.

avocation  
 depot  
 emigrant  
 factor  
 folk  
 home  
 individual  
 observance  
 party  
 sewerage  
 tracts

vocation  
 station  
 immigrant  
 part  
 family  
 house  
 person  
 observation  
 person  
 sewage  
 tracks

*it to me or shall I bring it to you?* but not, *I shall bring it to London when I go there.*

<sup>1</sup> *Can I?* means *Am I able to?* *May I?* means *Have I permission to?*

<sup>2</sup> We may, however, speak of the *setting* sun and a *setting* hen.

**120. Exercise.**

Put each of the following words, correctly used, into a sentence.

big	great
continual	continuous
disinterested	uninterested
few	a few
funny	queer
future	subsequent
incredulous	incredible
latest	last
liable	likely
nice	pleasant
practical	skilled
precipitous	precipitate
ugly	ill-tempered
unkempt	unkept

**121. Exercise.**

Put each of the following words and phrases, correctly used, into a sentence.

**ADVERBS.**

contemptuously	contemptibly
creditably	credibly
at fault <sup>1</sup>	in fault
literally	
merely	simply
quite	rather

**PREPOSITIONS.**

among	between
beside	besides

**CONNECTIVES.**

while

<sup>1</sup> *At fault means on the wrong scent; in fault means to blame.*

## ARTICLES.

A grocer and a market-  
man

A grocer and market-man

This is the correct term  
when two people are  
described.

This is the correct term  
where only one is de-  
scribed.

## ADJECTIVES AND ADVERBS.

handy  
most

near at hand  
almost

## A QUESTION.

Is the word *worse* used correctly in the following sentence?

I disliked milk worse than coffee.

## 122. Shall, will.

When we wish to express simple future action in English we have to fall back on some one of several devices. We might say, for instance,

I am to tumble overboard.

This states, however, more than a simple future fact. It states that arrangements have been made for my falling overboard.

We may say:

I am going to tumble overboard.

Under certain circumstances, however, this might mean,

I am going to the side of the boat for the sake of falling over.

We may say :

I will tumble overboard.

This spoken by any one who uses English carefully would mean :

I am determined to fall overboard.

We may say :

I shall tumble overboard.

*Shall* comes from an early English word meaning "to be obliged," so that this sentence might be interpreted to mean :

I am obliged to fall overboard.

When we wish to express defiance, to make promises or to offer services; we are justified in emphasizing the fact that our wills are at the bottom of the matter. We say :

In spite of all of you, I will be married to-morrow.

I will return the money next week.

I will take you coon-hunting, if you like that sort of thing.

But it is distasteful to any one of good breeding to be continually asserting that he has a will. It is certainly less disagreeable to say "I *shall* (that is, I am

obliged to) punish you " than to assert " I will (that is, I am determined to) punish you." It is much more tactful to say " I shall (that is, I cannot but be) be glad to see you," than to say " I will (that is, I am determined to) be glad to see you." It is for this reason that most careful writers and speakers use *shall* when speaking of their own future actions. They like it because there is no possible suggestion of conceit or self-assertion in the word. Of course in asking questions about themselves they never use *will*, for no one ever has to ask another what his own will is.

These are very simple distinctions but they seem too difficult for careless people. They always use *will* in the first person. They say " I *will* be pleased to see you;" " I *will* be punished by my mother;" " I *will* never get this right." But any one who enjoys being thoroughly intelligent even in little matters finds a solid satisfaction in keeping these distinctions in mind.

In the use of the second and third person, the difference between *will* and *shall* is much more often recognized. When we wish to domineer or threaten, we all say :

You shall do this right away.

He shall suffer for this.

Usually courtesy prompts us to use *will* in the second and third persons, for it is seldom that we wish to suggest that other people do things because they must. Even in giving commands, an officer in the army or navy prefers to use *will*. He says :



Mr. Jones, you will take the launch and carry these letters ashore.

On the other hand, when Robert Louis Stevenson wished to suggest that his larder was at the service of his friends if they would only come and visit him, he wrote:

You shall eat everything that is in the pantry.

In such a sentence *will* would mean something quite different and not half so polite.

Into each of the following sentences insert *will* or *shall* in each case, choosing the more tactful and courteous expression:

1. I ..... get your knitting for you, mother, if you tell me where it is.

2. I ..... be glad to get your knitting for you.

3. You ..... be a good boy, or I ..... whip you.

4. John, you ..... eat the biggest apple we can find.

5. I ..... leave for Europe the very day you arrive in town.

6. I ..... bring either my horse or my automobile as you wish.

7. I ..... drown and no one ..... save me.

In asking questions in the second and third persons, careful writers and speakers use the word they expect in the answer. They say:

When shall you be married?

When will you return the book if I let you have it?

When shall you return to town?

Insert the right word in each of the following sentences:

8. When ..... you take me to the circus?
9. When ..... you leave for Europe?
10. Whom ..... you see at the opera tonight?
11. Mr. Jones and Mr. Smith are here, whom ..... you see first?
12. How ..... you go to New York tomorrow?
13. .... you let me escort you home?

### 123. Lie and lay.

*To lie* is to recline; its principal parts are *lie, lay, lying, lain*.

*To lay* is to place; its principal parts are *lay, laid, laying, laid*.

Put the right word into each of the following sentences:

1. I have been ..... down.
2. I ..... down before dinner and took a nap.
3. I have ..... it down somewhere.
4. That cow has ..... down in the mud.
5. The hen is ..... an egg.
6. The cat is ..... in wait for a bird.
8. Come, ..... down here in the sun.
9. His farm ..... beyond the creek.
10. I have ..... in the hay all the afternoon.

### 124. Present use.

Language is continually changing. The books we read today will seem old-fashioned to our grandchildren, as the books our grandfathers once read seem old-fashioned to us. Old words are dropping

out, and we must let them go. Some of us may have heard the adjective *tasty*; it was in good use once; now it has been thrown on the scrap-heap and we had better leave it there. *If I be* was once a useful form; there is nothing that quite takes its place; but to use it now would seem an affectation.

The following selection is taken from the travels of an eccentric Englishman who three hundred years ago tramped across Europe to Venice and back. Rewrite the story in simple modern English, omitting some of the details. Fourpence halfpenny (equivalent to nine cents) is still a modern English term, and you may use it in your version.

One notable accident happened unto me in my way a little before I came to this Monastery and the City of Baden of which I will here make mention before I write anything of Baden. It was my chance to meet two clowns, commonly called Boors, who because they went in ragged clothes shook no small terror into me; and by so much the more I was afraid of them, by how much the more I found them armed with weapons, myself being altogether unarmed, having no weapon at all about me but only a knife. Whereupon fearing least they would either have cut my throat or have robbed me of my gold that was quilted in my jerkin, or have stripped me of my clothes, which they would have found but a poor booty. For my clothes being but a thread-bare fustian case were so mean (my cloak only excepted) that the Boors could not have made an ordinary supper with the money for which they should have sold them: fearing (I say) some ensuing danger, I undertook such a politic and subtle action as I never did before in all my life. For a little before I met them I put off my hat very courteously unto them, holding it a pretty while in my hand and very humbly (like a mendicant friar) begged some money of them \* \* \* \* in a language that they did

but poorly understand, even the Latin; expressing my mind unto them by such gestures and signs, that they well knew what I craved of them; and so by this begging insinuation I both preserved myself secure and free from the violence of the clowns, and withall obtained that of them which I neither wanted or expected. For they gave me so much of their tin money called pennies (as poor as they were) as paid for half my supper that night at Baden even four pence half-penny.

THOMAS CORYAT: *Crudities*.

### 125. Present use, continued.

Many of the words that remain in the language for centuries convey very different ideas to one generation from what they do to another. A few of us may remember what a change has come over the word *strenuous* within the last ten years. We can never think of it now without thinking of President Roosevelt, newspaper paragraphs about him, the Rough Riders, and political campaigns. In times past, other words have changed in much the same way. They have become associated with some man or some class of men or some incident that affects or, as we say, colors the meaning for us. Just as the word *messenger-boy* calls up a smile today, so knave, which once meant nothing more than boy, called up a smile four hundred years ago. Little by little that smile changed the whole meaning of the word. To use words well we must know how they are being used today, how they are changing in meaning, what smiles they will raise, what associations they will call up, what feelings they will provoke.

New words are all the time being added to the lan-

guage. All of us, for instance, are older than the term *automobile*. Some of these new terms, like *automobile*, *employee*, *cowboy*, *gramophone*, are necessary. The quicker we are in recognizing and using these necessary words the better.

Some words are struggling for a permanent place and we cannot tell whether they will win it. Do we need both *wheel* and *bicycle*, *biograph* and *kinetoscope*, *trolley-car* and *electric-car*, *grind* and *joke*? Do the words *crank*, *dude*, *fad*, supply a place not already filled? It is a good thing to be alive to all these new words and to exercise all our discretion in choosing or rejecting them.

Some new words are evidently vulgar and useless, will last only a little while and then drop out. Others may be to the point among friends, but would make us seem impertinent among strangers. Still others may be perfectly good English in one part of the country, while a synonym will be the good English of another part. A few will at last find their way into the most careful and formal speech of the most careful and formal persons.

#### 126. Exercise.

Pick out exact synonyms for each of the following words where possible. Where that is impossible, define the word. A definition of a word is such a description of it as includes the whole of what it means and nothing else. A *crank*, for instance, may be defined as any one who has a mind ill-balanced and subject to whimsical, absurd, and impracticable

notions, without being irresponsible; especially one who is assertive or meddlesome.

- |                            |                      |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. dude.                   | 6. to referee.       |
| 2. fad.                    | 7. to umpire.        |
| 3. bluff.                  | 8. feed (as a noun). |
| 4. flunk.                  | 9. to down.          |
| 5. craze (used as a noun). | 10. to scrap (verb). |

### 127. Provincial use; colloquial use.

Any locality with a character of its own has some peculiar usages. What Philadelphians call a *square*, New Yorkers call a *block*; what Englishmen call a *box* Americans call a *trunk*. The word *buggy* is never used outside the United States, nor the word *shay* outside New England. People in Southern Indiana call any queer creature or object a *genius*, or a *do-funny*.

Any active boy or girl, man or woman will make good use of these special words of a locality as long as he is in it. When we leave it, we have need of our discretion. There is no harm, of course, in occasionally showing the place we come from by our speech. We like the Scotchman all the better for his burr, the Southerner for a trace of his Southern modulation. But we can hardly be said to talk intelligently unless we know whether the words we use are natural to the people we are speaking to. We need to know what words are peculiar to our own localities and what are in common use over the whole English-speaking world. The following are a few of the differences between English and American usage.

AMERICAN.	ENGLISH.
pitcher	jug
elevator	lift
editorial article	leader
baggage	luggage
check (for baggage)	brass
public school	board school
locomotive (or engine)	engine
pie	tart
street-car	tram

The following are a few words used differently in different parts of the country, or used only in some parts of it.

barge (bus)  
evening (afternoon)  
shade (blind)  
dock (wharf)  
quail (bob-white)  
team (horse and wagon)  
clever (good-natured)  
up the street (down town)

There are a few people who talk, as we say, like a book. They never use such abbreviations as don't or doesn't, can't and shouldn't. They make no distinction between informal conversation or familiar letters, on the one hand, and serious public addresses and treatises on the other. Such people we call stiff and pedantic. There are others who carry the freedom of familiar speech into what should be dignified and deliberate. They use the slang of the street in sermons, and the short-cuts of common speech in public prayer. A nice use of English requires that we should write and speak according to the occasion.

We may use colloquial English freely in conversation and in themes. In applications for positions, in commencement addresses, in school reports, we need to use a more formal sort. But after all, such matters cannot go by rule. To make a wise choice, habitually, we must know our own place, know what is due to others, and try to fit the occasion as simply and perfectly as we can.

### 128. A list of forbidden things.

Moreover, there are different sorts of colloquial English. In the left-hand column are some instances of phrases that are never used even in conversation by well-trained and careful speakers. In the right-hand column are phrases that are in good use.

I ain't	I'm not
<i>any</i> cannot modify verbs;	
it can modify adverbs.	are you going to study at
We should not say:	all?
"Are you going to study	are you going to study any
any?"	longer?
anybody's else	any body else's
any place	any where
anyhow	at any rate; no matter what
	happens
we aren't	we're not; aren't we?
awful; awfully	

School-girl slang, when used as an intensive.



I feel bad

An ambiguous phrase.

I feel badly

Some writers object to this. It is used, however, by many careful speakers and is not ambiguous.

I don't blame it on him

should be

I don't blame him for it

But what. "I don't know  
but what I did"

I don't know but that I did

We can say, however,

I know nothing but what I  
heard in school this after-  
noon

for this sentence is  
strictly grammatical.

could of

A stupid blunder.

could have

cunning

Sentimental slang. A  
fox is cunning; no in-  
nocent child can be.

charming, dear

disremember

elegant

School-girl slang, for  
good, fine, etc.

electrocute

electrocution

enthuse

even-up

seldom or ever

A stupid blunder.

gorgeous

School-girl slang.

had I have known it

A blunder.

had ought to

Illiterate English.

hadn't ought to

hain't

heaps of

how?

However could he do it?

kind of tired

leave me do it

school lets out

like I do

square up accounts

seldom if ever; seldom or  
never

had better

Better English than  
*would* better, not only  
colloquially but in formal  
writing.

had I known it

should

shouldn't

had rather

Quite as good English  
as *would rather*, though  
possibly less formal.

haven't

a great deal of

what was that?

How could he ever do it?

rather tired

let me do it

school closes

as I do

*Like* is properly a preposition equivalent to *like to*.

lot, lots

a great deal of

As a *lot of friends, lots of candy*.

love, lovely

School-girl slang.

mad

for angry.

middling good

fairly good

mighty

very

School-boy slang.

neither—or

neither—nor

no how

by no means

pants

trousers

Pen-names should never be abbreviated. We should always say Mark Twain, George Eliot, and never *Twain* and *Eliot*.

cleverest of any, best of any, etc.

cleverest of all, best of all, etc.

to walk a little piece

to walk a little way

quite a few

a good many

quite some

a good many; a good deal

to raise children

to bring up children

raised

brought up

Rev.

should never be used  
with the surname alone.  
We should say the *Rev.*  
*Mr.*, the *Rev. Dr.*, or  
use the full name, thus:  
*Rev. Charles Jones.*

right glad

very glad

the same as I did it

in the same way as I did it

Sir

as a title should never  
be used with a surname  
alone. It may be used  
with the Christian name  
alone, however. We  
should not say *Sir*  
*Browne*, but we may say  
*Sir Thomas Browne* or  
*Sir Thomas.*

I sort of like him

I rather like him

I have studied some

I have studied a little

Careful speakers never  
use *some* as an adverb; as  
*I skate some.*

I skate a little

to take on

is not good English for  
*to be excited.*

terribly

Slang.

these sort of; these kind of	this sort; this kind
unknown to him	without his knowledge
uncommon good	uncommonly good
lengthways; sideways	length wise, side wise
always, a little ways	a little way

### 129. Exercise.

In the selection from *Bob, Son of Battle*, pages 123-125, pick out the local expressions. In the dialogue, pages 23-25 and 36-37, pick out the good colloquial expressions. Give the equivalent of both in such formal English as is in general use.

### 130. Phrases.

An English statesman, Lord Beaconsfield, once wished to express his opinion of another great statesman, Gladstone. He thought of six words which fitted his rival's character very well indeed. Then he packed all these words into a single phrase. This phrase, however, instead of being six truths became very much like nonsense. Like "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers," it sounded as if it were an amusing feat in pronunciation. For what Beaconsfield called Gladstone was "a sophisticated rhetorician inebriated with the exuberance of his own egotistical verbosity."

Every word we use may say just what we mean and yet, when the words are combined, we may discover that they entirely misrepresent us. Tricky people often flatter themselves that they are honest because no one word they use is inexact although they intend

that the words shall combine so as to convey an untruth. Humorous people sometimes use words in this same way. A mate on a sailing vessel, so the story runs, was assigned to the duty of keeping the log. He was a hard-drinking man and much exasperated at the fact that the Captain would allow no liquors on board. To square up accounts, he used to write every day among the other items of the log this literal truth but unqualified slander: "Captain's still sober."

In every language, there are many phrases which convey a clear and accurate impression although, if we choose, we may make fun of their logic. We may quibble over the statement "*He was standing in his shirt-sleeves*" by asking: Does a man stand in his shirt-sleeves because his arms are in them? Yet no sensible person will hesitate to use such a sentence. We all know precisely what it means. There are no other phrases which will give the same idea so vividly. We are following the example of careful writers and speakers when we use it. What is true in this case is true in others. If our phrase as a whole conveys an exact impression, we may sacrifice literal accuracy in individual words to vividness.

In the same way we may and often do sacrifice literal accuracy to courtesy. *I think it will not rain* is a precise expression. *I don't think it will rain* is, perhaps, less precise if we examine each word separately, but it is far pleasanter, more modest, less assertive. It conveys a much truer impression of what most of us wish to say when we are forming a guess about the weather.

We may sacrifice literal truth to brevity; for brevity is not only a saving of our reader's time; it adds a spice to our style. We may say, *she walked up the aisle on her father's arm; I am going down in the subway; he was a good shot; do you feel like a cup of tea?* We know precisely what each of these phrases means; we could find no other way to say so much in so short a space. Language is all the time making short cuts. We need all the discretion at our command to decide what ones are sensible and pleasant and what are cheap and blatant. We may cut *editorial article* to *editorial* for instance if we wish, but if we cut it to *ed* we advertise the fact that we prefer brevity to the usages and traditions of men and women of refinement. To be sure no law compels us to regard these traditions. Various people set various fashions in language. It rests with each of us to determine whose fashions he will follow.

As we have just seen, there are other considerations besides literal accuracy which will affect a sensible man's judgment in the use of language. He will consider the habits of others, courtesy, brevity, vividness. But whatever he considers he will never write well unless each sentence taken as a whole, each paragraph taken as a whole, each composition taken as a whole conveys to the reader a precise idea of what he means and feels.

### 131. Exercise.

Write a theme on one of the following subjects:

1. The Sounds I Hear Between Five and Six at Night.
2. A Character I Have Read About in Fiction.

3. Queer Phrases One Overhears at School.
4. Some One on My Street.
5. Disappointment Long Ago.

### 132. Making phrases for one's self.

Unfortunately, whenever we wish to express any feeling, humorous or serious, happy or sad, a number of ready-made phrases are very likely to spring to our minds. Among the commonest of these are *Old Sol*, *bright and early*, *bright and beautiful*, *grand and good*, *like a silver thread in the landscape*, *like a sentinel*, *our genial friend*, *the gentle reader*, *the inner man*, *the simple life*. One could fill a good many pages with a list of this sort. Perhaps those who coined these phrases meant just what they said, but we have all heard them so often from the lips and pens of merely imitative people that we no longer think of attaching any more feeling to them than to the words of a parrot.<sup>1</sup>

If we are to write so as to convince people that we mean what we say, we must dismiss all this hackneyed language from our minds, look at our subject through our own eyes, and try to put the different pictures it makes for us and the feeling it rouses in us into little groups of words of our own invention. We can get

<sup>1</sup> Phrases that do not try to be humorous, or pathetic, full of high spirits or tragic, but state simple facts in the simplest way, never grow tiresome. *Across lots*, *down town*, *around the corner*, for instance, are as useful to-day as they ever were. Nor do single words wear out very often. We do grow tiresome, however, when we profess to express our own feelings as if they were fresh and original in emotional phrases that have been used over and over again.



a great deal of pleasure by making phrase-pictures of this sort.

Here are a few from school themes.

ON THE GRASS.

Your elbows fitting comfortably into the soft turf which  
is negligently called grass  
decided individuality in grass-blades  
sway esthetically  
vibrate in the most jovial manner

ON A COLD DAY.

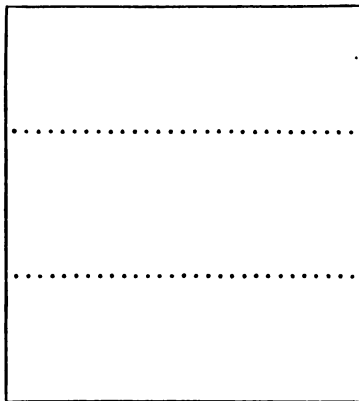
clapping his hands against his sides to keep warm  
Now the school-boy is called and whistled for at the foot  
of the stairs  
One climbs gingerly and unwillingly out of bed

## CHAPTER VII

### HOW TO WRITE LETTERS

#### 133. Business letters.

A business letter should be so legible that a busy man can read it rapidly. It should be so clear that he can understand it at the first reading. It should be brief; it should be courteous. A writer may be sharp when occasion requires, but he never need be boorish. On the other hand, no matter how friendly he may feel, a strictly business letter to a business firm or corporation is not the place for friendly messages. The paper should be plain white, unlined, and when folded in the following fashion should fit neatly into an envelope made of the same material.



Note carefully the following model of a letter. Copy it neatly on unruled theme paper. Allow a margin of a half-inch on the left side, and a quarter of an inch on the right side.

114 West Fourteenth Street,  
Brooklyn, N. Y.  
January 5, 1905.

Messrs. Day & Robinson,  
165 Fifth Avenue,  
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Dear Sirs:

Will you kindly send me an estimate on the cost of packing and boxing four hundred (400) books at my address and delivering them at the freight station of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad?

Very truly yours,  
John Bascom.

The place of business of the person, firm, or company addressed may be omitted. The salutation should be either, Dear Sir; Dear Sirs; Dear Madam (for a married woman); Dear Miss Brown (for an unmarried woman). The salutation may be followed by a comma or a colon. The comma is less formal.

There are a number of expressions which are appropriate in business letters, though they are not appropriate elsewhere. *Balance* in the sense of *rest* or *remainder* is one of these words. *Posted* for *informed* is perhaps another. On the other hand, *combine* for *combination*, *hand-write* for *hand-writing* or for *to*

*write by hand* are not good business English. Only by experience can we learn to make these distinctions. It is a good rule to avoid a business term unless we know precisely what it means and by what sort of business houses it is used. For the worst use of abbreviations in letters see pages 167 and 171.

The formal closing should be, *Yours truly*, or *Very truly yours*. *Sincerely yours* may be used in less formal business letters where the writer is known personally to the person addressed. *Respectfully yours*, even when addressed to an elderly person, or one of high station, savors of obsequiousness. Beneath their signature married women should always place the name by which they wish to be addressed, as

Very truly yours,  
Henrietta Bowman  
(Mrs. Samuel Bowman).

Girls and unmarried women, unless their letters make it perfectly clear that they are unmarried, should always put (Miss) in parentheses before their names, as in

Very truly yours,  
(Miss) Sarah Cutter.

The envelope should be addressed as follows:

Day and Robinson,  
165 Fifth Avenue,  
Brooklyn,  
N. Y.

The commas may be omitted if the writer prefers. Abbreviations, however, should always end in a period. For abbreviations of the states see pages 202-203.

**134. Exercise I.**

1. Write a letter to the *Outdoor Magazine*, 45 Broadway, Boston, Massachusetts, enclosing three dollars for one annual subscription.

2. Write to the General Passenger Agent of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Road, asking if train No. 7, leaving the Grand Central Station at one p. m., can be stopped Saturday afternoon, June 4, at New Rochelle, to allow a party of forty school children from New York to get off.

3. Notify the *Outdoor Magazine* of a change in your address.

**135. Exercise II.**

1. Write to the Model Dairy Co., 62 Johnson Street, New York City, notifying them that milk was not left at your door on Friday morning, June 10.

2. Write to the Athletic Outfitting Company, 75 Maiden Lane, Boston, Massachusetts, to apologize for the fact that you sent them a check without any signature, and enclosing another to take its place.

3. Write to Miss Matilda Smith, Jones' Ferry, Vermont, asking in your father's behalf if you can secure room and board for your father's family for two weeks in the summer. State all the facts she would need to know and give references.

**136. Exercise III.**

1. Write to the public lecturer, Mr. John Willis, asking him on what terms he would speak in your town for the benefit of the High School.

2. Write to the Rev. John Bronson, asking him to deliver the Commencement address at the school next June.

3. Write to Wanamaker's, asking that package left by mistake be called for.

4. Write to the Manager of a school team challenging it to a game, and asking him to arrange date and details.

5. Write to the Secretary of Princeton University or of Vassar College, asking for a circular of admission requirements.

6. Apply for a position as catalogue or file clerk in the business house of Sanderson and Son, Photographic Outfitters.

**137. Social letters.**

School drill cannot train any one to write personal letters of friendly news and gossip, humor and goodwill. To gain skill in this, one must trust to one's good temper, one's good sense, and the general character of one's education. The following suggestions may not be out of place, however.

We may use the terms we should use freely in conversation. We may use *don't* (for *do not*, not for *does not*), *can't*, *shan't*, *won't*, *we're not*, *you're not*, and in questions *aren't*. In brief, the language of conversation is much better than talking like a book. (For further talk on colloquial expressions see p. 166.)

On the other hand, friendliness doesn't require us to be illegible, slovenly, careless. It doesn't require us to cover our letters with either ink-blots or tears. We shall not be less natural and informal because we use short, pithy words and crisp, pointed sentences. We can be alert in our ideas and intelligent in our spelling, punctuation, and grammar without hurting the feelings of the most intimate friend. No one is going to be offended because we use all the mind we have on his account. The writer who is stiff is the one who is afraid to say just what he means, or who uses a great many words when he has nothing to say. But writing what we really have to say as clearly and pointedly as we can in a legible way is the only means we have of being as interesting as possible to others. No letter or note of any sort is better for being scented.

Fortunately for our convenience there are various sorts of social notes which are manufactured according to rule. These are known as formal notes. Like all social letters, these should be written on plain note-paper, without fanciful edges or coloring. They should fit into an envelope with one folding. Copy the following models:

### **138. Formal invitations and replies.**

The formal notes of invitation and reply run as follows:

Mr. and Mrs. Bronson request the pleasure of Mr. Harrison's company at dinner on Friday, August fifteenth, at seven o'clock.

Twenty-seven, North Broadway,  
August the tenth.

Observe that in formal social notes, arabic numbers are not given. All numbers are written out. Observe, too, that the date and place of writing are put at the lower left-hand corner. The proper reply to this note would be either one of the two following:

Mr. Harrison accepts with pleasure the invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Bronson for Friday evening, August fifteenth, at seven o'clock.

Fifty-three, North Tenth Street,  
August the eleventh.

Mr. Harrison regrets that a previous engagement prevents him from accepting Mr. and Mrs. Bronson's invitation for Friday evening.

Fifty-three, North Tenth Street,  
August the eleventh.

Observe that in the acceptance of an invitation the date and hour of it are always given. This is to prevent misunderstanding. In a regret, the date and hour are omitted. In sending regrets one may change the phrasing according to the circumstances. One may write *illness prevents*, or *circumstances prevent*, or one may write that he is *unable to accept*.

The following is a less formal invitation, and the proper replies to it:

My dear Mrs. Cutler,

Will you and Mr. Cutler give us the pleasure of your company at dinner on Friday, August seventeenth, at seven o'clock?

Sincerely yours,

Anna Stone.

20, McAdam Street,  
August tenth.



My dear Mrs. Stone,

It will give us great pleasure to dine with you on Friday, the seventeenth, at seven o'clock.

Sincerely yours,  
Susan Cutler.

44, North Eleventh Street,  
August eleventh.

My dear Mrs. Stone,

I am sorry that a previous engagement will deprive us of the pleasure of dining with you on Friday.

Sincerely yours,  
Susan Cutler.

44, North Eleventh Street,  
August eleventh.

When one writes an invitation it is never wise to force one's self to be familiar. The reply, however, should be as formal or informal as the invitation.

### 139. Exercise.

1. Write a formal invitation in your parents' name to Miss Janet Wilder for luncheon to meet Miss Louise Smith.

Write her formal declination.

Write her formal acceptance.

2. Write an informal invitation in your own name to Mr. Carlton Smith for dinner on the yacht Malay.

Write his declination.

Write his acceptance.

## CHAPTER VIII

### PUNCTUATION

#### 140. Full stops.

- (1) The period marks the end of
  - (a) declarative sentences.
  - (b) imperative sentences.
  - (c) abbreviations.

The child laughed.

Recite.

G. A. R.

- (2) The interrogation point marks the end of
  - (a) interrogative sentences.
  - (b) interrogative clauses that call for an answer.
  - (c) sentences ending in a question.

1. Are you going to town?

2. Was the bruise in the flesh? or did it extend to the bone? Was it on the heel? or on the toes? or on the instep?

3. Harry asked, Where are you going?

- (3) The exclamation point may be used to mark the end of
  - (a) important exclamations.
  - (b) words used with great emotion in address.
  - (c) exclamatory sentences.

1. Alas!
2. Father of light and life! Thou God Supreme!
3. Give me liberty, or give me death!

#### 141. Exercise.

Punctuate the following:

1. Run for a doctor
2. Are you in the cellar
3. I heard him call out, Can you throw me a rope
4. Who are you where do you come from what do you want here you are a suspicious character
5. U S A
6. N Y
7. He is not the man I took him for
8. Away with him away with him

#### 142. Quotation marks.

(1) Quotation marks indicate

(a) the beginning and end of exact quotations when they are not so common as to be proverbial,

“This is a great puzzle to me,” said my brother.

(b) the beginning of every quoted paragraph,<sup>1</sup>

(c) and, if a writer chooses, words objectionable to him.

“Beautified” is a vile phrase.

<sup>1</sup> It is impossible to give an illustration of (b) in this volume. When quotations are set off by a liberal margin from what goes before and what follows, and from the edges of the book or manuscript, it is not necessary to use quotation marks. Notice the long quoted passages in this volume.

- (2) Single quotation marks indicate the beginning and end of quotations within quotations.

“ ‘Beefsteak and gravy’ was his exact words,” said the waiter.

#### 143. Exercise.

Put the right quotation marks in the proper places in the following:

My father, after ranging us in chairs around him, took my theme out from his pocket and began to read:

The point of a pin is very sharp. Sometimes it gets bent over. Then it is no good. Once men sharpened pins by hand. Once my brother Tom stuck a pin into me.

That isn't so, Tom burst in impatiently.

What isn't so, said my father.

Once my brother Tom stuck a pin into me isn't so repeated my brother.

Of course it isn't so rejoined my father very much annoyed you haven't any brother Tom.

Well, any way, I never did stick a pin into him, said Tom and he shan't say so.

Shan't isn't a nice word for a little boy to use, said my father quietly, and he went on with the reading.

#### 144. Dashes.

The dash marks

- (a) an abrupt change of statement,
- (b) the beginning of a repetition, summary, or amplification of a previous statement,
- (c) the beginning and end of phrases which have no grammatical relation to the rest of the sentence but are put in as an aside.

Then John said—but that's another story.  
—all these arguments could not turn him  
from his purpose.

Jane Austen's wittiest story—they are all  
clever—is *Pride and Prejudice*.

#### 145. Exercise.

Complete the punctuation of

1. A little dog he was the strangest creature I ever saw  
came running round the corner.

2. I think it's but to tell the truth, I don't know much  
about it any way.

3. The hens were scratching in the garden, the cow was  
in the corn, the cat was running away with the canary in  
its mouth, the baby had just swallowed a pin and the  
children were daubing the house and themselves with a can  
of red paint they had found all these things combined to  
disturb my father's piece of mind as he drove up that  
morning to the farm.

#### 146. Parentheses.

Parentheses enclose

- (a) cross-references.
- (b) letters or figures used as (b) is in this line.
- (c) synonymous phrases which would cause  
confusion if marked off by commas.
- (d) parentheses are often used in place of the  
dash (see 140).

- 1. John Brown (see page 000) has been  
proved to have been innocent.
- 2. I wrote (dictated) the letter this morning.
- 3. Jane Austen's wittiest story (they are all  
clever) is *Pride and Prejudice*.

**147. Exercise.**

Put parentheses in the proper places in the following sentences:

1. Dr. Johnson see the opposite page denied this statement.

2. There was what the New Englanders call a barge 'bus at the door.

3. There is evidence indeed, it is not denied by any biographer that Alexander Pope practiced more than one fraud upon the public.

**148. Brackets.**

Brackets enclose words which are not in the original text but are added or substituted by an editor or copyist.

1. Friends, Romans, and countrymen [loud applause]

2. The speaker began his discourse by saying "Girls [most of the women in the audience were gray-haired], be faithful workers."

3. Instead of describing what he saw about him, he [Goldsmith] idealized the past.

**149. The comma.**

The comma is used for three main reasons. *First*, it sets off words, phrases, or clauses used in an independent way in a sentence, as, for example,

(a) *yes* and *no* when used as answers to questions,

(b) words used in address,

(c) unemphatic exclamations at the beginning of a sentence.

Yes, I saw him yesterday.  
John, come here right away.  
Come here, Mary, right away.  
Well, that was a pity.

Punctuate the following sentences :

1. I don't know Henry what you mean.
2. I should be glad my dear fellow to help you if I only could.
3. Yes yes of course yes.
4. Well Charlie you *say* Yes but I suppose you mean *no* for I never know when I can believe you.
5. Why don't you speak for yourself John

In the *second* place, the comma is used for parenthetical ideas, not important enough for the use of parentheses, as, for example,

- (*d*) important conjunctions and conjunctive phrases interjected into the sentence but not necessary to it,
- (*e*) the nominative absolute if not so long or confusing as to require parentheses,
- (*f*) words in apposition if not too germane or too short,
- (*g*) modifying clauses or phrases if not too restrictive or too short.

The following sentences are correctly punctuated. Note that some of them contain no commas. Compare the preceding rules.

(*d*) Dr. Johnson, however, was not our physician from the beginning.

(*d*) Shakespeare, after all, does not wish us to think that the life in the forest of Arden is very real.

(e) He had some trouble in getting anything to eat, every inn in town having closed its doors at midnight.

(f) William the Conqueror was a Norman.

(f) Clive, the conqueror of India, began life as a clerk.

(g) The road which you must take to reach the doctor's turns off at the first brick house.

(g) The road, which evidently had only just been finished, was in wretched condition for wheelmen.

Note, in the first of the two preceding examples, the clause beginning with *which* is necessary to define what road is meant. Such a clause is called restrictive and is not set off with commas. In the second, the clause beginning with *which* simply adds a descriptive touch to the mention of the road. Such a clause is called descriptive and is set off with commas.

(g) The house on the hill is cool and comfortable.

(g) Dr. Brown's house, with the stable attached, will be sold at auction next Thursday.

### 150. Exercise.

Punctuate the following sentences where punctuation is necessary:

1. He was nevertheless in no haste to help us.
2. John the Baptist ate locusts and wild honey.
3. Washington the first President of the United States refused to take a third term.
4. He is no doubt a remarkable man.
5. Money in the bank is safer than money in one's pocket.
6. My friends with an extraordinary lack of tact were constantly urging me to give up wearing paper collars.
7. The man who always seeks his own interests first deserves no friends.



8. The book which every one reads as soon as it comes out every one quickly forgets.

9. My host who had already fallen asleep several times and waked up with a start now proposed that we all go to bed.

10. All the family being at dinner in the basement he had no trouble in entering the house and taking what he wished.

11. My father though now over seventy was still hale and hearty.

12. The house which had never been in good condition was now uninhabitable.

#### 151. The comma, continued.

The comma also marks off

- (h) words or groups of words arranged in a series, when they are not already separated by conjunctions,
- (i) words or groups of words where the conjunctions do not make the separations emphatic enough,
- (j) all subordinate clauses that begin a sentence with *if*, *when*, *whenever*, *where*, *wherever*, although the comma may be omitted when the clause is short and complete.

(h) John, James, and Henry were all seated at the table.

*or*

John, James and Henry were all seated at the table.

The doctor told the sexton,  
And the sexton tolled the bell.

**152. Exercise.**

Punctuate the following sentences:

1. Over hill over dale  
Through bush through brier  
Over park over pale  
Through flood through fire  
I do wander everywhere.
2. When blood is nipped and ways be foul  
Then nightly sings the staring owl.
3. Studies serve for pastimes for ornaments for abilities.
4. Reading maketh a full man conference a ready and writing an exact man.
5. I can keep honest counsel ride run mar a curious tale in telling it and deliver a plain message bluntly.
6. He counted them all. Not a child was missing. There was John, and James, and Henry, and Katy, and Katy's doll, and the cat.
7. (j) If I am not mistaken, you borrowed five dollars of me last year for the same purpose.
8. (j) When well off, he spent money because he had it, and when poor, he spent it to keep up his spirits.

**153. The comma, continued.**

The comma marks also

- (k) words or phrases which are out of their regular order,
- (l) the fact that a word is to be understood,
- (m) a verb quotation from the words which introduce it.

(k) To the good, old age is the time of content.

(l) From law arises security; from security, inquiry; from inquiry, knowledge.

(m) He answered, Go into all the world and preach the Gospel.

Punctuate the following:

1. With you I have no secrets.
2. Repeat after me Twice two is four.
3. From praise he gained encouragement; from criticism stimulus.
4. One was examined upon certain scandalous words spoken against the king. He confessed them and said "It is true I spoke them and if the wine had not failed I had said much more."
5. To a wise man all experience is useful

#### 154. The semicolon.

The semicolon marks off

- (a) groups of clauses which have themselves been broken up by commas,
- (b) other coordinate clauses when the comma does not seem emphatic enough.

There were four groups of people in the hall: one, the mayor, the aldermen and the politicians generally; another, the soldiers and the sailors; a third, the students from the college; a fourth, the women and the children.

I do profess to be no less than I seem; to serve him truly that will put me in trust; to love him that is honest; to converse with him that is wise, and says little; to fear judgment; to fight when I cannot choose; and to eat no fish.

## Punctuate:

Ben Jonson was burly, frank, combative Shakespeare, pleasant, demonstrative, amicable.

## 155. The colon.

The colon marks off

- (a) such terms as *to wit, namely, for example,*
- (b) the salutation in a formal letter,
- (c) a long or emphatic quotation making complete sense, where the comma doesn't seem emphatic enough,
- (d) independent clauses from each other, when these have been broken up by semi-colons.

1. I have here three kinds of money, to wit: silver money, gold money and paper money.

2. Gentlemen:

I beg leave to hand in my resignation as a member of the board of directors of the Camera Club.

3. It had been hard for me that spoke it to have put more truth and untruth together in a few words than in that speech: Whosoever is delighted in solitude is either a wild beast or a god.

4. Follow me; thou shalt serve me: if I like thee no worse after dinner I will not part from thee yet.

ИЗДАТЕЛЬСТВО

~~SECRET~~

1. DATE  
 2. TIME  
 3. LOCATION  
 4. REMARKS

~~SECRET~~ ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ ~~TOP SECRET~~

THE IN  
THE U  
THE IN THE

4. I have neither the scholar's melancholy which is emulation nor the musician's which is fantastical nor the courtier's which is proud nor the soldier's which is ambitious nor the lawyer's which is politic nor the lady's which is nice nor the lover's which is all these but it is melancholy of mine own compounded of many simples extracted from many objects and indeed the sundry contemplation of my travels in which my often rumination wraps me in a most humorous sadness

5. Romans countrymen and lovers hear me for my cause and be silent that you may hear believe me for mine honour and have respect to mine honour that you may believe censure me in your wisdom and awake your senses that you may be the better judge If there be any in this assembly a dear friend of Cæsar's to him I say that Brutus' love to Cæsar was no less than his If then that friend demand why Brutus rose against Cæsar this is my answer Not that I loved Cæsar less, but that I loved Rome more Had you rather Cæsar were living and die all slaves than that Cæsar were dead to live all free men. As Cæsar loved me I weep for him as he was fortunate I rejoice at it as he was valiant I honour him but as he was ambitious I slew him There is tears for his love joy for his fortune honour for his valour and death for his ambition Who is here so base that would be a bondman If any speak for him have I offended Who is here so rude that would not be a Roman If any speak for him have I offended Who is here so vile that will not love his country If any speak for him have I offended I pause for a reply

6. I have of late but wherefore I know not lost all my mirth forgone all custom of exercises and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame the earth seems to me a sterile promontory this most excellent canopy the air look you this brave o'erhanging firmament this majestic roof fretted with golden fire why it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is man how noble in reason how infinite in faculty in form and moving how express and admirable in action how like an angel in apprehension how

like a god the beauty of the world the paragon of animals  
And yet to me what is this quintessence of dust man delights  
not me no nor woman neither though by your smiling you  
seem to say so

### 158. Capitals.

With most of the uses of the capital letter students are familiar before they reach the high school. There are a few, however, to which their special attention needs to be called.

1. Names of streets are best capitalized as follows:

Twenty-third Street.  
One Hundred and fifth Street.

2. In a title, capitals should be used for the first word and all important words thereafter.

John of Gaunt.  
A Man Without a Country.

3. Names of demoninations and parties should be capitalized when it is necessary to make clear that a specific denomination or party is intended, as in: All of us, Republicans and Democrats alike, believe in republican (that is, representative) government and the democratic spirit (that is, the spirit of liberty, equality, and fraternity).

4. The names of historical documents and events should be capitalized, as,

The Civil War, The Treaty of Paris.

5. The months and the days of the week should be capitalized but not the seasons, as,

September, Friday, fall.

6. The exclamation O should be capitalized.

7. Capitals should be used for words derived from proper names, as,

Wesleyan, American, Shakespearean.

### 159. The apostrophe.

1. The apostrophe should be used in the possessive case, before *s* when it is the sign of the possessive case, and after *s* when it is the sign of the plural as,

man's, men's, girl's, three girls'.

2. The apostrophe should be used to mark the plurals of figures, of letters, and of words used as names of themselves, as,

Your 7's are not clear.

Dot your i's.

Your and's are badly written.

3. The apostrophe should be used to mark the omission of a letter, as,

The boys of '76 (for 1776).

He couldn't do it.

### 160. Italics.

Underscore all words which should be italicized in print. Italics are used for



- (a) foreign words and phrases, as *Monsieur*,
- (b) for the titles of books and plays, when  
they are not set off by quotation marks,  
as, Longfellow's *Hiawatha*,
- (c) for words which the writer wishes to  
emphasize. This form of emphasis  
should rarely be used,
- (d) for words used as the names of themselves.  
We may for this purpose, however, use  
the single quotation marks, as *and* or  
'and'.

#### 161. Exercise.

Copy the following passages in correct form:

my brother and i with john, our hired man, and mayor  
bright from fishkill on the hudson went trout fishing in the  
adirondacks on monday of last week. it was a beautiful  
september day; the leaves had begun to show the effect  
of fall coloring and the air was invigorating. We had some  
hot discussions on the way for john is a prohibitionist.  
I mean that he belongs to the party which voted for doctor  
swallow during the election he used to go down to the  
party headquarters occasionally at forty-third street, new  
york city and get literature on the subject. the mayor  
quoted the declaration of independence and asked john  
if he thought men who had fought to be free in the revolu-  
tionary war would have stood for laws about what they  
should drink. john said o what have they to do with it;  
we've grown wiser today

Johns book

mens clothing

your ands, your is and your 7s are all very badly written  
why don't you write more carefully?

Vive le roi said my uncle, proud of his little knowledge  
of french

## APPENDIX

### 162. Symbols of correction.

App. p. 00.	See the appendix to this book, page 00.
Cap. with = under the word to be corrected.	Use a capital letter.
cl.	Not clear.
con.	Connective poor.
gr.	Grammar is faulty.
ill.	Illegible; cannot be read.
Ital.	Use italics.
l. c. with a line through the letter to be corrected.	Lower case (a printer's term); don't use capitals.
p.	Punctuation faulty.
p. 5 (c)	A reference to the rule 5 (c), or some other, in this book.
¶	Make a new paragraph.
no ¶	A new paragraph not needed.
sp.	Misspelling.
stet	Disregard the changes made.
weak	The expression is weak.
wordy	Too many words used for the idea.
W.	Wrong word used.
^	Something omitted.
δ	Cut out.

### 163. Abbreviations.

Two abbreviations can always be used. These are Mr. and Mrs. So may abbreviations of academic de-

grees like D.D. and Dr. Such forms as Jr., Sir., Esq., and Rev.<sup>1</sup> can always be used with a man's name, as Dr. Brown, John Smith, Esq., James Potter, Jr., Esq. The use of other abbreviations is in good taste only where they will prove an evident convenience to the reader, as in foot-notes, lesson-plans, and bills. The abbreviation of such titles of honor as Prof. for Professor and Gen. for General is not in good taste. Just as bad is the attempt to abbreviate pseudonyms, as Geo. Eliot for George Eliot. *Till* is not an abbreviation of *until*; there is, therefore, no reason for spelling it 'til'. It is a complete word.

#### GEOGRAPHICAL ABBREVIATIONS.

Ala., Alabama.	Gt. Brit., Great Britain.
Alas., Alaska.	I., Ida., Idaho.
Ariz., Arizona.	Ill., Ills., Illinois.
Ark., Arkansas.	Ind., Indiana.
Balto., Baltimore.	Ind. T., I. T., Indian Territory.
Cal., California.	Kans., Kansas.
Can., Canada.	Ky., Kentucky.
Col., Colo., Colorado.	La., Louisiana.
Conn., Connecticut.	Lab., Labrador.
D. C., District of Columbia.	Lond., London.
Del., Delaware.	Mass., Massachusetts.
Den., Denmark.	Md., Maryland.
Edin., Edinburgh.	Me., Maine.
Eng., England.	Mich., Michigan.
Fla., Florida.	Minn., Minnesota.
Fr., France.	Miss., Mississippi.
Ga., Georgia.	Mo., Missouri.
Germ., Germany.	

<sup>1</sup> Rev. should never be used with the surname alone. We should say the Rev. Charles Jones or the Rev. Mr. Jones, or the Rev. Mr. Jones, or the Rev. Dr. Jones, but never the Rev. Jones.

Mont., Montana.	Phila., Philadelphia.
N. C., North Carolina.	R. I., Rhode Island.
N. Dak., North Dakota.	S. C., South Carolina.
Nebr., Nebraska.	S. Dak., South Dakota.
Nev., Nevada.	Tenn., Tennessee.
New M., New Mexico.	Tex., Texas.
N. H., New Hampshire.	Va., Virginia.
N. J., New Jersey.	Verm., Vt., Vermont.
N. Y., New York.	Wash., Washington (State).
O., Ohio.	Wis., Wisconsin.
Ont., Ontario.	W. Va., West Virginia.
Ore., Oreg., Oregon.	Wyo., Wyoming.
Pa., Pennsylvania.	

## SOME OTHER ABBREVIATIONS.

A. B., Bachelor of Arts.	Bldg., Building.
A. D., In the year of our Lord, that is, since the birth of Christ.	Brit. Mus., British Museum.
A. M., Before noon.	c., <i>Circa</i> , about.
Abbrev., Abbreviated.	Cap., Capital.
Abr., Abridged.	Capt., Captain.
Advt., Advertisement.	Card., Cardinal.
Alex., Alexander.	Cat., Catalogue.
Ang.-Sax., Anglo-Saxon.	Chap., Chapter.
Anon., Anonymous.	Chas., Charles.
Apr., April.	C. O. D., Collect on Delivery.
Arith., Arithmetic.	Col., Colonel.
Assoc., Association.	Colloq., Colloquial.
Aug., August.	Constr., Constructive.
Auth., Author.	Cont., Containing.
Ave., Avenue.	Cor., Corner.
B. A., Bachelor of Arts.	D. D., Doctor of Divinity.
B. C., Before Christ.	Decl., Declension.
Bart., Baronet.	Dem., Democratic.
bbl., Barrel.	Dept., Department.
Benj., Benjamin.	Deriv., Derived.
	Dial., Dialect.

Diet., Dictionary.	Hf., Half.
Dram. Pers., The characters of the play.	Hist., History.
12mo, Duodecimo.	Hon., Honorable.
E. G., For example.	H. p., Horse Power.
Ed.; Edit., Edited.	Ibid., In the same place.
Edw., Edward.	Id., The same.
Elem., Elementary.	I. E., or i. e., That is.
Ency., Encyclopedia.	Illus., Illustrated.
Epis., Episcopal.	Imperf., Imperfect.
Equiv., Equivalent.	Incorp., Incorporated.
Esq., Esquire.	Incl., Including.
Etc., Et cetera, And other things.	Incog., Incognito.
Etym., Etymological.	Indecl., Indeclinable.
Exc., Except.	Infin., Infinitive.
F.; Ff.; Following; Follow- ing (plural).	Inst., Institute.
Fahr., Fahrenheit.	Instr., Instrument.
Fcp., Foolscap.	Internat., International.
Feb., February.	Interrog., Interrogative.
Fem., Feminine.	Intrans., Intransitive.
Fol., Folio.	Is., Island.
For., Foreign.	Jan., January.
Freq., Frequently.	Jap., Japan.
Frid., Friday.	Jas., James.
Fut., Future.	Jn., Junction.
G. A. R., Grand Army of the Republic.	Jos., Joseph.
Gen., General; Genesis.	Jour., Journal.
Gend., Gender.	Jr., Junior.
Geog., Geography.	Jun., Junius.
Geol., Geology.	Knt., Knight.
Geom., Geometry.	L., or <i>l.</i> , Line.
Gloss., Glossary.	Ll., or <i>ll.</i> , Lines.
Goth., Gothic.	Lang., Language.
Govt., Government.	<i>l. c.</i> , Lower case, a printer's term, meaning in small letters.
Gram., Grammar.	Lieut., Lieutenant.
Hdkf., Handkerchief.	M., Noon.
	M., <i>Monsieur</i> .
	M. D., Doctor of Medicine.

M. P., Member of Parliament.	Retd., Returned.
Mag., Magazine.	Rev., Reverend; Revised.
Maj., Major.	Rich., Richard.
Masc., Masculine.	Rom. Cath., Roman Catholic.
Mdm., Madam.	Sat., Saturday.
Mdse., Merchandise.	Sam., Samuel.
Mfg., Manufacturing.	Sec., Secretary.
Mlle., Mademoiselle.	16mo, Sedecimo.
Mon., Monday.	Sen., Senator.
Morn., Morning.	Shak., Shakespeare.
Ms., Manuscript.	Soc., Society.
N. B., Take Notice.	Sp., Spelling.
New Test., New Testament.	St., Saint; Street.
Nov., November.	Stet., Let it stand.
Oct., October.	Str., Steamer.
Old Test., Old Testament.	Sund., Sunday.
Orig., Originally.	Supr., Supreme.
8vo, Octavo.	Surg., Surgeon.
P. M., After midday.	Thos., Thomas.
P. O., Post Office.	Thurs., Thursday.
P. S., Postscript.	Tr., Transpose.
P.; pp., Page; Pages.	Trans., Translated.
Phot., Photograph.	Treas., Treasurer.
Pro. Tem., For the time being.	Tu., Tuesday.
Prox., Next month.	Ult., Last month.
Pub., Published.	Vid., See.
Q. E. D., Which was to be proved.	Vol., Volume.
Qto., Quarto.	Viz., That is to say.
R. F. D., Rural Free Delivery.	Voc., Vocabulary.
Rec'd, Received.	Wed., Wednesday.
	wk., Week.
	Wm., William.

## PREPARING MANUSCRIPT

## 164. Copying prose.

If you look at any paragraph in this book you will see that the first line does not begin directly beneath the beginning of the line above it. It is set in a little further from the edge of the page. This is called the indentation of the line. In writing, every new paragraph should begin the width of two or more letters further in than the other lines of the page. You will also note that every speech in a dialogue is a separate paragraph. Copy the selection, pages 57-58, taking especial pains with the paragraph indentation, the capitals, the spelling, and the punctuation.

## 165. Copying poetry.

A line of prose consists of all the words printed in one straight line between the right and left margin of the page. A line of poetry, however, is not determined by the size of the page in this way. It consists of a fixed number of accents. In some forms we have six accents, in some five, in some four, etc., according to the nature of the poem:

## 6 accents

This is the forest primeval; the murmuring pines and  
the hemlocks.

## 5 accents

The voice I hear this passing night was heard  
In ancient days by emperor and clown.

## 4 accents

Happy the man whose wish and care  
A few paternal acres bound.

## 3 accents

Too hard it is to sing  
In these untuneful times.

## 2 accents

Mary, Mary,  
Quite contrary.

In writing verse, we should begin each line of the poetry as a new line on the page. We should do this even if we quote one line. We should do it even if the line of verse before it has run over as we say. The following lines are correctly copied:

Tom, Tom,  
The piper's son.

Notice that every line of poetry begins with a capital.

Full fathom five thy father lies;  
Of his bones are coral made;  
Those are pearls that were his eyes:  
Nothing of him that doth fade  
But doth suffer a sea-change  
Into something rich and strange.  
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell:  
[Burthen. Ding-dong.]

Hark! now I hear them,—Ding-dong, bell.

In a play we often find that part of a line of verse is given to one speaker, the rest of it to another. This second part by the new speaker is printed on a new



line but begins just below where the previous part has ended.

Scene II. The Island. Before PROSPERO'S cell.

Enter PROSPERO, the rightful Duke, and MIRANDA,  
his daughter.

*Prospero.* Be collected:  
No more amazement: tell your piteous heart  
There's no harm done.

*Prospero.* O, woe the day!

*Prospero.* No harm.  
I have done nothing but in care of thee.  
Of thee, my dear one, thee, my daughter, who  
Art ignorant of what thou art, nought knowing  
Of whence I am, nor that I am more better .  
Than Prospero, master of a full poor cell,  
And thy no greater father.

*Miranda.* More to know  
Did never meddle with my thoughts.

*Miranda.* 'Tis time  
I should inform thee farther. Lend thy hand  
And pluck my magic garment from me. So.

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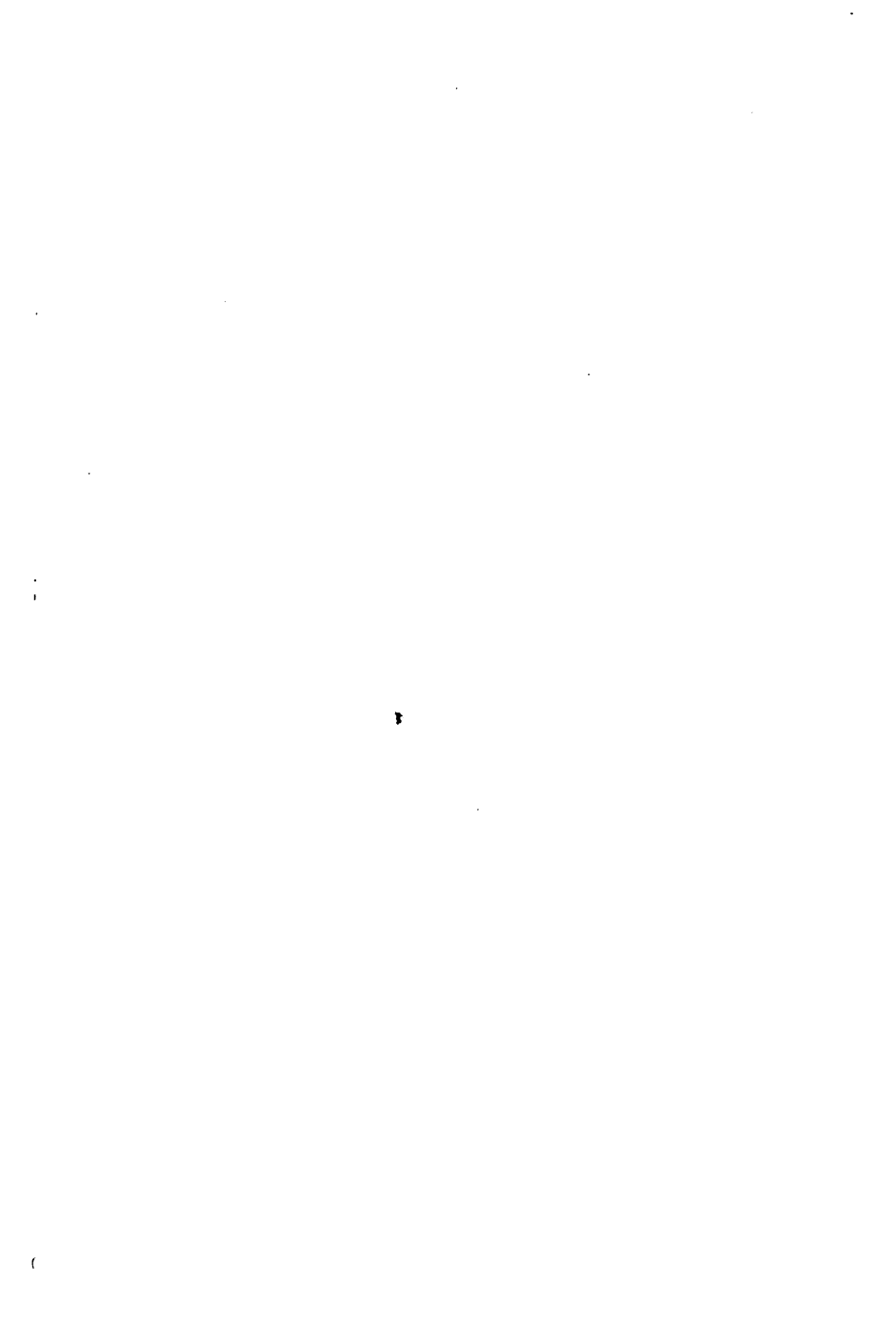
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